**ACROSS** / A16

**Plunder case filed** vs DPWH, Mandaue execs over lampposts

**BUSINESS** / B1

**RP urged** to liberalize cement industry

**SPORTS** / A27

**Now even Shane** Mosley wants a piece of Pacquiao

**METRO** / A21

**8 armed men rob** Meralco QC office of P800,000 in 10 minutes

**ENTERTAINMENT** / F1

**Cannes Festival** exec looking for Filipino movies

### Pagasa folk losing hope, seek fine weather abroad

**By TJ Burgonio**

THE PHILIPPINES' "WORLD-CLASS" WEATHER forecasters are being lured by foreign companies to do exactly what they're doing—but with a fat paycheck.

Last month, in a growing sign of a brain drain in the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, a Singa-

PAGASA/ A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, March 21, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 103 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

### Smoking ages not just your face but your skin

CHICAGO—SMOKING not only can wrinkle the face and turn it yellow—it can do the same to the whole body, researchers reported on Monday.

The study, published in the Archives of Dermato-

SMOKING/ A15

NGEK! BUONG KATAWAN KULUBOT!

# General does an Atong

## CHR probers clear Palparan in killings

**By Jocelyn R. Uy**

A COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS fact-finding team has found no "concrete evidence" linking retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan and other officers under his command to the spate of alleged extrajudicial killings in Central Luzon when he was regional military commander there.

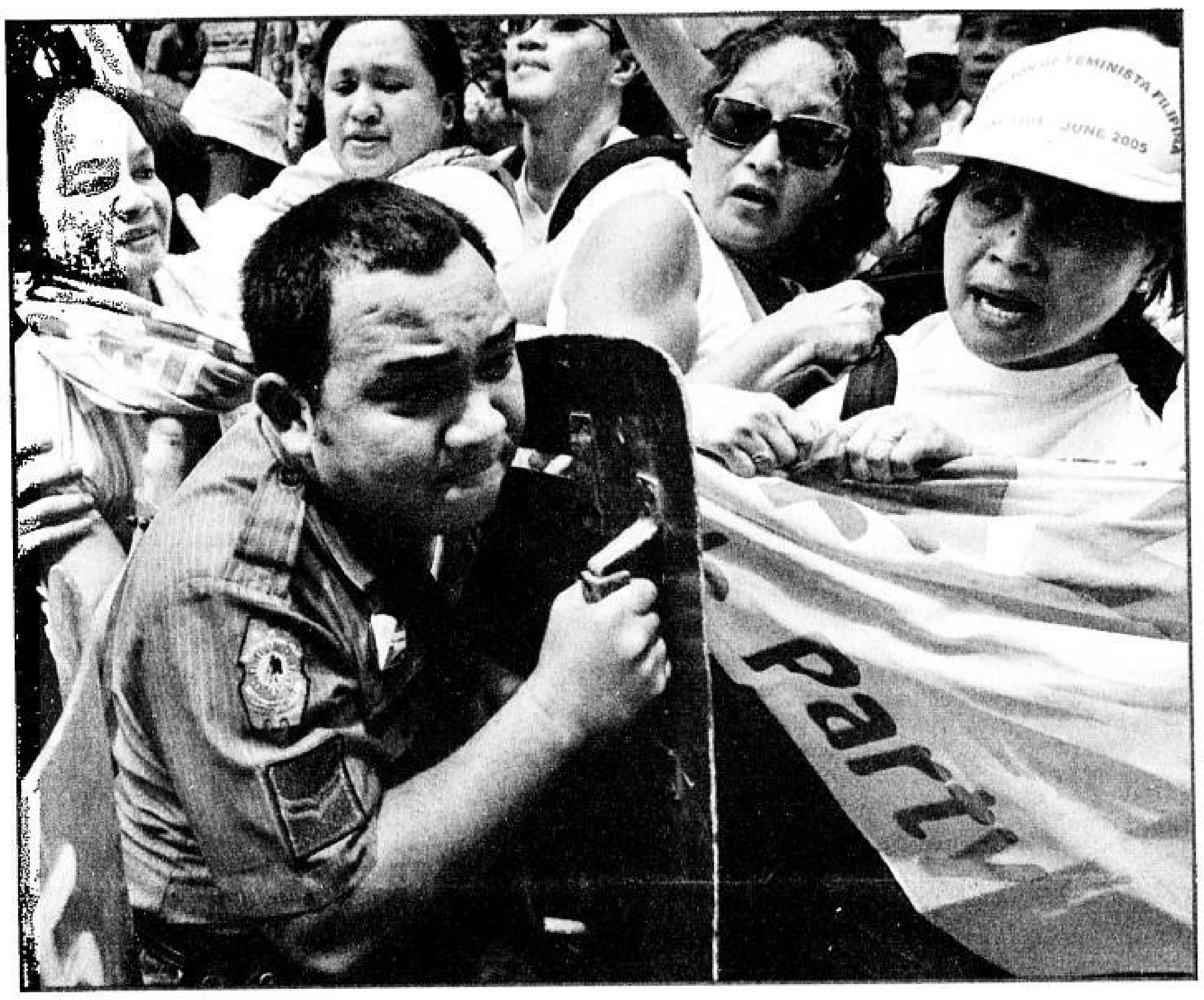
Commissioner Eligio Mallari yesterday said he had sent his recommendation to the other commissioners on Monday but that the entire CHR panel had yet to arrive at a final decision.

In a 20-page resolution, Mallari said he had recommended that the cases filed by human rights groups against Palparan and other officers of the 7th Infantry Division be dismissed in the absence of prima facie evidence pointing to them as being responsible for the killings and other human rights violations in Central Luzon.

"There is no concrete and direct evidence that it was Palparan who ordered the killings," Mallari told the INQUIRER by phone yesterday.

He said that even if the 7th Infantry Division was headed by Palparan, command responsibility "is not a subject

CHR/ A6



**OUTNUMBERED**
An antiriot policeman uses his shield to push back members of the militant women's group Gabriela protesting the arrest of Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo during a rally on Claro M. Recto Avenue in Manila on Tuesday. EDWIN BACASMAS

## Offers P20M for dropping of graft cases

**By Jocelyn R. Uy**

A RETIRED COMPTROLLER of the Armed Forces of the Philippines appears to be taking a leaf from Charlie "Atong" Ang.

Lt. Gen. Jacinto Ligot, who was charged with corruption in the Sandiganbayan in 2005 for allegedly amassing P135.28 million in ill-gotten wealth, is offering the government more than P20 million of his assets in exchange for the withdrawal of the cases filed against him and his family.

Ligot is the predecessor of former AFP comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, now also retired, who is charged with plunder and perjury in connection with purported ill-gotten wealth amounting to more than P300 million. The last time Garcia was heard of, he was being held at Camp Crame.

In a proposal to the Office of the Special Prosecutor, lawyers Antonio Zulueta and Rafael Zialcita said Ligot's offer "should not be taken as an admission of any liability of our clients and cannot be used as evidence against them."

The lawyers said the offer was only for purposes of "amicably settling" the cases against Ligot and his family.

Ligot's offer, marked confidential and a copy of which was furnished the INQUIRER, was addressed to Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos and acting Deputy Special Prosecutor Humphrey Monteroso.

It was filed with the Sandiganbayan Fourth Division on Monday, hours after the Special Division sentenced Ang, a former gambling buddy of deposed President Joseph Estrada, to two years and four months up to six years in prison.

GENERAL/ A10

## I am my own man, says Leyte judge

**By Joey A. Gabieta**
*Inquirer Visayas*

HILONGOS, LEYTE—THE JUDGE WHO holds the fate of militant lawmaker Satur Ocampo in his hands rides to work on a motorcycle, scoffs at police offers of bodyguards, and insists he is immune to pressure from above.

"I am my own man," Executive Judge Ephrem Abando said, dismissing speculation that he was pressured into ordering the arrest of the Bayan Muna representative and of the top officials of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Abando, the presiding judge of Regional Trial Court Branch 18, said he saw merit in the complaint filed on Feb. 28 against Ocampo and the others.

Abando, 52, spoke to the INQUIRER the other day minutes after he caused a po-

I AM/ A10

## Cory amnesty key to Satur acquittal

**By Vincent Cabreza,**
*Inquirer Northern Luzon*

BAGUIO CITY—AN AMNESTY DECLARATION issued some 20 years ago by then President Corazon Aquino may be the key to Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo's freedom as he faces murder charges over the killing of suspected military spies in the 1980s, his supporters say.

Bayan Muna national vice chair Manuel Loste yesterday said that he and Ocampo's lawyer, Neri Colmenares, hoped to meet with Aquino and reelectionist Sen. Joker Arroyo to discuss the matter.

Arroyo was Aquino's executive secretary at the time and the official who prepared the 1987 proclamation granting amnesty to rebels.

The proclamation benefited not only Ocampo but also Communist Party of the Philippines founding chair Jose Ma. Sison and other political prisoners.

Under the declaration, Aquino granted "full and complete amnesty in favor of all persons who have or may have committed any act penalized under existing laws in furtherance of their political beliefs."

Aquino also specified that her proclamation would not apply "to crimes or acts

CORY/ A10

## SC sacks CA justice for gross ignorance of the law

**By Leila B. Salaverria**

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY sacked Justice Elvi John Asuncion of the Court of Appeals for "gross ignorance of the law," saying that judges were expected to have "more than a modicum of acquaintance with the statutes and procedural rules."

Asuncion was not only dismissed from the service, his retirement benefits were also forfeited. In addition, he was slapped a three-month suspension without pay for "intolerable inaction" on motions for reconsideration in several cases he was handling.

Asuncion's woes stemmed from two complaints, according to the decision reached en banc.

The first complaint came in the form of an unsigned letter claiming the 55-year-old Asuncion sat on motions for reconsideration for six months to more than a year unless the parties "come across."

The second complaint was filed by Roberto Padilla and charged Asuncion with dereliction of duty, malicious delay in the administration of justice and gross ignorance of the law in the case of Erlinda Archinas, a Philippine National Bank (PNB) employee who was seeking reinstatement.

Adopting the findings of the investigating justice, Bernardo Pardo, the Supreme Court said Asuncion had indefinitely extended a temporary restraining order (TRO) in the PNB case.

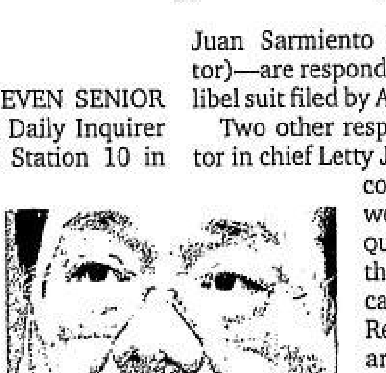
The court said Asuncion first issued on

SC SACKS/ A15

## Inquirer publisher, 7 editors detained after posting bail

**By Allison W. Lopez**

THE PUBLISHER AND SEVEN SENIOR editors of the Philippine Daily Inquirer were detained at Police Station 10 in Pandacan, Manila, for an hour yesterday after they posted bail in a libel suit filed against them by Jose Miguel Arroyo, the President's husband.



**ARROYO: Payback time**

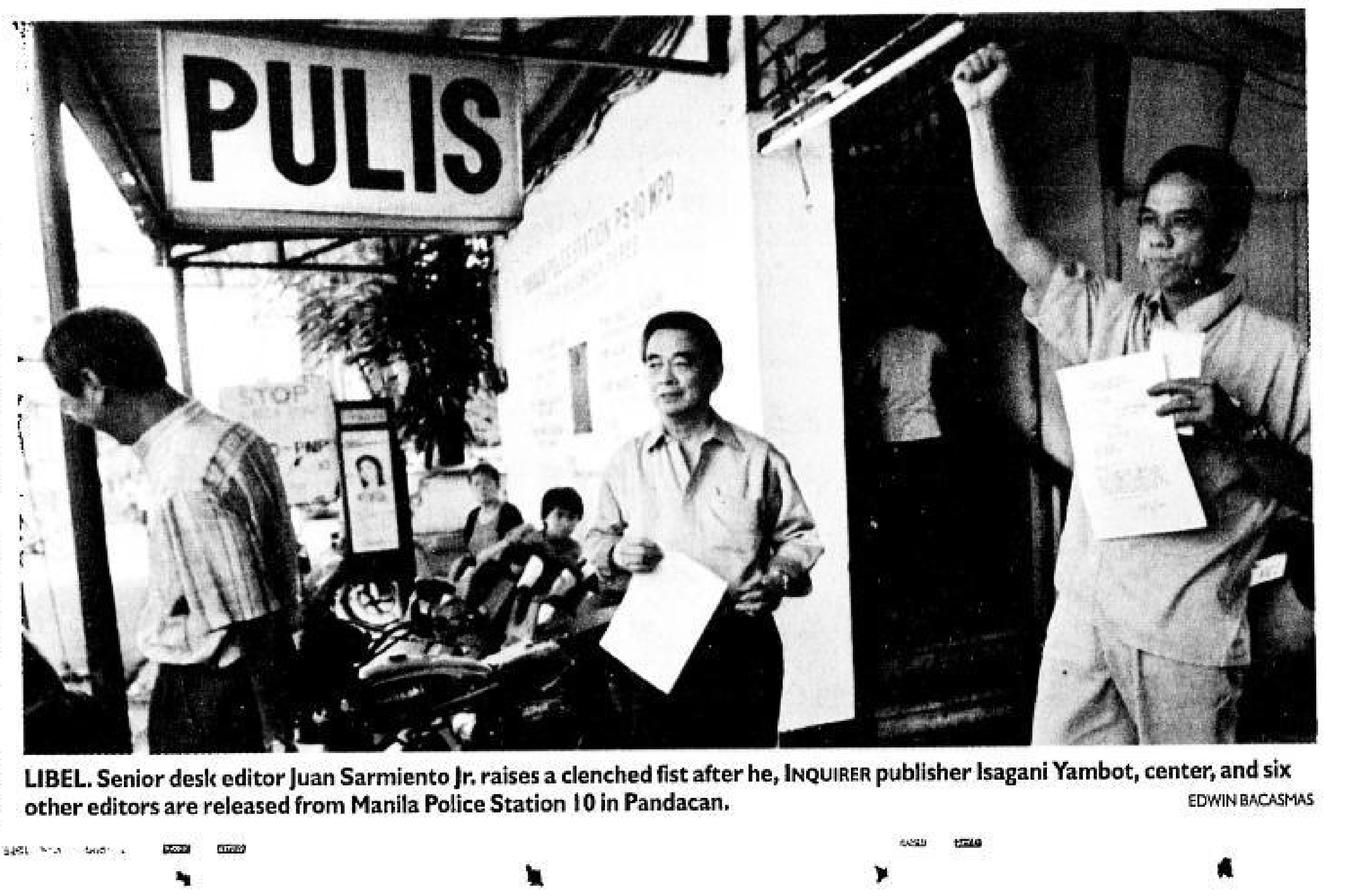
Publisher Isagani Yambot and the editors—Jose Ma. Nolasco (managing editor), Abelardo Ulanday (associate editor), Jorge Aruta (opinion editor), Artemio Engracia Jr. (news editor), Pergentino Bandayrel Jr. (national editor), Rosario Garcellano (associate editor for readership) and Juan Sarmiento Jr. (senior desk editor)—are respondents in the P22-million libel suit filed by Arroyo last year.

Two other respondents, INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Jimenez Magsanoc and columnist Ramon Tulfo, were not with the "INQUIRER 8" when each of them posted P50,000 cash bonds at the Manila Regional Trial Court at around 2 p.m.

The libel suit stemmed from several columns written by Tulfo in which he exposed the alleged smuggling activities of Vicky Toh and her brother. Toh had been romantically linked to Arroyo.

Instead of appearing in court, Yambot and the INQUIRER editors were told to go

INQUIRER/ A6



**LIBEL.** Senior desk editor Juan Sarmiento Jr. raises a clenched fist after he, INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot, center, and six other editors are released from Manila Police Station 10 in Pandacan. EDWIN BACASMAS

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Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
5 1 1 | 1 4 6
(All in exact order)

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
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# Second FrontPage

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**WEATHER FORECAST**

FORECAST: Northern and Central Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Manila | Partly Cloudy | Iloilo/Bacolod | Cloudy with Rains |
| Baguio | Cloudy with Rains | Roxas | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tuguegarao | Cloudy with Rains | Cebu | Cloudy with Rains |
| Laoag | Cloudy with Rains | Tacloban | Cloudy with Rains |
| Clark Zone | Cloudy with Rains | Gen. Santos | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tagaytay | Partly Cloudy | Zamboanga | Cloudy with Rains |
| Legazpi | Partly Cloudy | Cagayan de Oro | Cloudy with Rains |
| Calapan | Partly Cloudy | Davao | Cloudy with Rains |

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/03/20/07 SOURCE PAGASA

# Hungry? Quit smoking, texting

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

CLARK FREEPORT—GOING hungry? Then cut down on your texting, smoking, drinking and other "luxuries."

This was Malacañang's advice to the public after a Social Weather Stations survey showed that one in five families or an estimated 3.4 million households nationwide, has experienced hunger at least once in the past five months.

The SWS survey findings contradict the claims of the six-year-old Arroyo administration that the alleged fruits of its economic policies are already being felt by the people.

The President said mitigating hunger remains a priority of her administration but she noted that the incidence of hunger was not only due to poverty but also to the lack of opportunities for many Filipinos.

"The overall drive for investments and jobs will also help dent the incidence of hunger although we know that this issue cannot be totally attributed to poverty and lack of opportunity but also to the spending patterns of the people," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

"I ask our people to spend on the basics first before the luxuries so our children will have enough to eat," she added.

When asked if the President could be accused of looking for a scapegoat and dictating how people should spend their money, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "I think the President is just citing a reality—we have to educate our people on the proper way of utilizing meager resources."

## Cut down on texting

"If you cannot give [your children] milk or proper food then you should start cutting down on other expenses," Bunye told reporters at the Clark special economic zone in Pampanga, where the President signed two bills granting tax amnesty to locators.

Bunye ticked off unnecessary expenses: "You can cut down on cigarettes and [alcoholic] drinks. Instead of three bottles, one or two would suffice. You can have substantial savings if you cut down on unnecessary expenditures including text messaging."

Before signing the tax amnesty bill and the bill creating the Clark freeport zone here, Ms Arroyo went to Capas, Tarlac to inaugurate the Capas Food Terminal. She said the terminal would help ensure adequate food supply and low prices in the region.

## Rolling stores

According to the President, her administration has programs to address poverty and hunger.

"We always take these reports with a sense of urgency and we want to pinpoint the specific areas and communities where hunger may be rife so that effective intervention can be mounted," Ms Arroyo said in a statement. "I shall continue to see to it that nobody is left behind in the social payback of economic growth, and fighting hunger shall be a constant priority in strategic and immediate levels."

She said her administration was "advancing agricultural production programs, broadening and speeding up the food distribution system and balancing out disparities and fluctuations."

The President said her government put up rolling stores in poor communities, monitored and checked prices in the markets and ensured that food transport routes around the country are "running smoothly from farm to market."

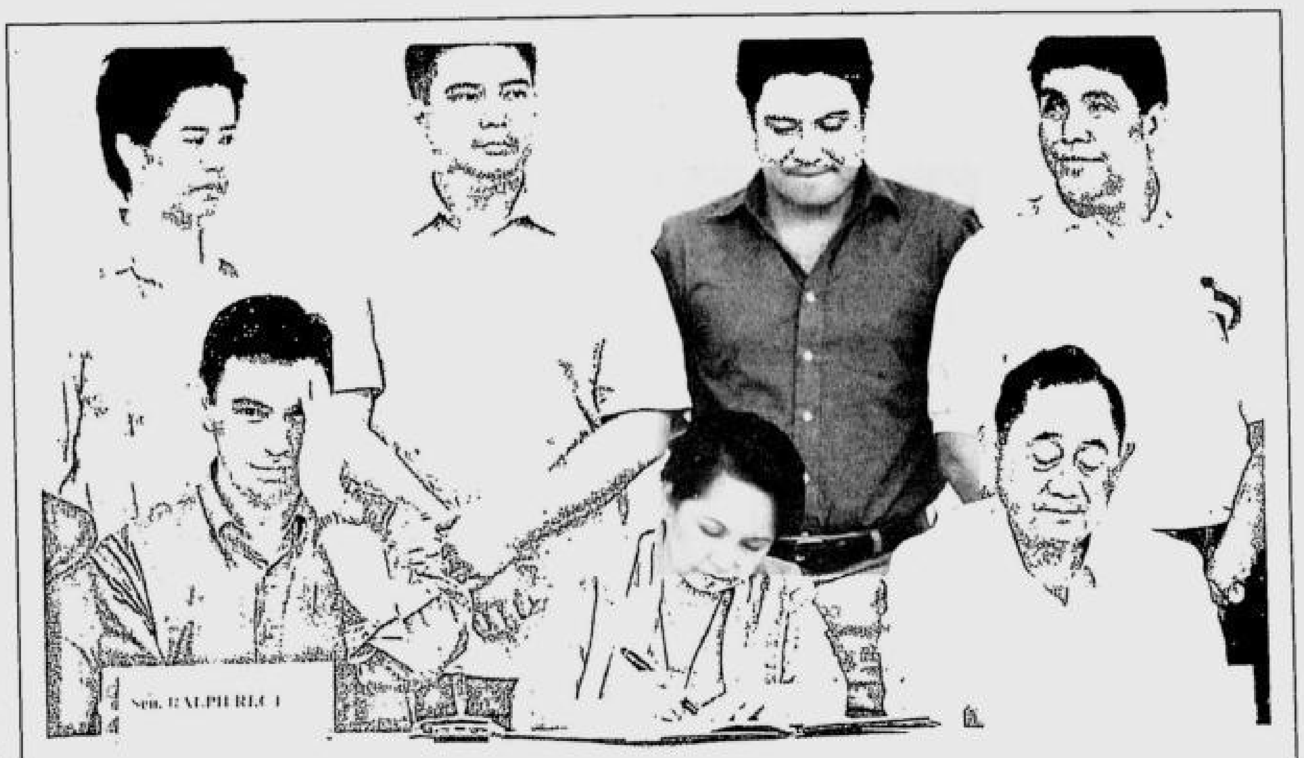
## Hunger pangs

Meanwhile, Senate President Manny Villar said that if the government's so-called economic gains do not trickle down to the common people, poverty—particularly the hunger level in the country—will continue to worsen.

"We cannot really call them gains if they are not felt by the people, especially the poorest of the poor," Villar said in a statement faxed to the INQUIRER.

According to Villar, the government's economic gains have not resulted into the creation of new jobs. They have not attracted more investments nor alleviated poverty.

He suggested a three-pronged approach to ease the problems of poverty and hunger in the country—institute reforms in agriculture, education and the investment sectors.



**NEW LAWS.** Flanked by Speaker Jose de Venecia and the laws' author, Sen. Ralph Recto, President Macapagal-Arroyo signs the two laws. Looking on are Reps. Anna York Bondoc and Mikey Arroyo, and senatorial candidate Miguel Zubiri and Prospero Pichay.

LYN RILLON

# GMA signs 2 Clark laws

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

CLARK, PAMPANGA—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday signed into law two bills creating the Clark Freeport Zone and granting a tax amnesty to businesses investing here.

Bases Conversion and Development Corp. president Narciso Abaya hailed the enactment of of Republic Act 9399 and RA 9400 as "giant steps" in achieving the President's "8 by '08" mantra.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee who sponsored the twin bills, said the new law would address the investors' threats to pull out of Clark, which could have resulted in the loss of some 45,000 jobs.

RA 9399 granted a one-time tax amnesty to business establishments at Clark and other free port zones which incurred tax liabilities after the Supreme Court ruled in July 2005 against the constitutionality of the tax incentives and duty privileges granted to businesses locating in what was formerly known as the Clark economic zone.

In his speech, Abaya said the country's free port zones have been operating "under a serious constraint" since the SC ruled against the incentives granted to investors in the economic zones.

Under the new law, business enterprises in the free port zones are required to pay P25,000 within six months.

RA 9400, on the other hand, declares the former US Clark Air Base proper, measuring some 4,400 hectares, as a free-port zone to be managed as a "separate customs territory ensuring free flow or movement of goods and capital equipment."

Instead of paying local and national taxes, business enterprises within the free port will pay a 5-percent tax on gross income.

According to Levy Laus, the Clark Development Corp. president, the new laws would "definitely further enhance Clark's competitiveness as one of the most attractive investment destinations in Asia."

He said almost 30 ha of land near Clark's main gate, occupied by local businesses, would be excluded from the free-port area.

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# Barangay folk prefer soldiers to cops–AFP

APPARENTLY, SOLDIERS ARE the preferred peacekeepers over policemen in some Metro Manila barangays.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines' Civil Relations Service (CRS) released to the media yesterday copies of resolutions submitted by barangay officials "expressing their gratitude for the soldiers."

In a statement, the AFP-CRS said this disputed claims the military was not welcome in these communities.

"They also requested the retention of the troops or, if possible, the deployment of more of them, especially in areas frequented by criminal elements," the AFP-CRS said.

The barangays that favored the military presence were Baseco in Tondo, 649 in the Port Area, 870 in Pandacan, and 590 and 868 also in Manila.

The Barangay 590 resolution said the "assignment of the anti-insurgency team from the AFP" to maintain the peace was "a good step to make the residents feel safer."

The Baseco barangay concurred, saying: "If possible we want an additional group of the Philippine Army in our area."

In Baguio City, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said on Monday the soldiers deployed in depressed urban areas would be recalled, but he did not say when.

Esperon was in Baguio to attend the graduation rites at the Philippine Military Academy.

"The (troop) deployment in urban areas will end, but we will study where they will be placed (next). We're just waiting to finish daycare, school and sanitation projects" in those areas, he said.

Twenty-six teams composed of 260 junior military officers and personnel and 5,000 reservists have been deployed in depressed Metro Manila barangays, according to Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, commanding general of the National Capital Region Command.

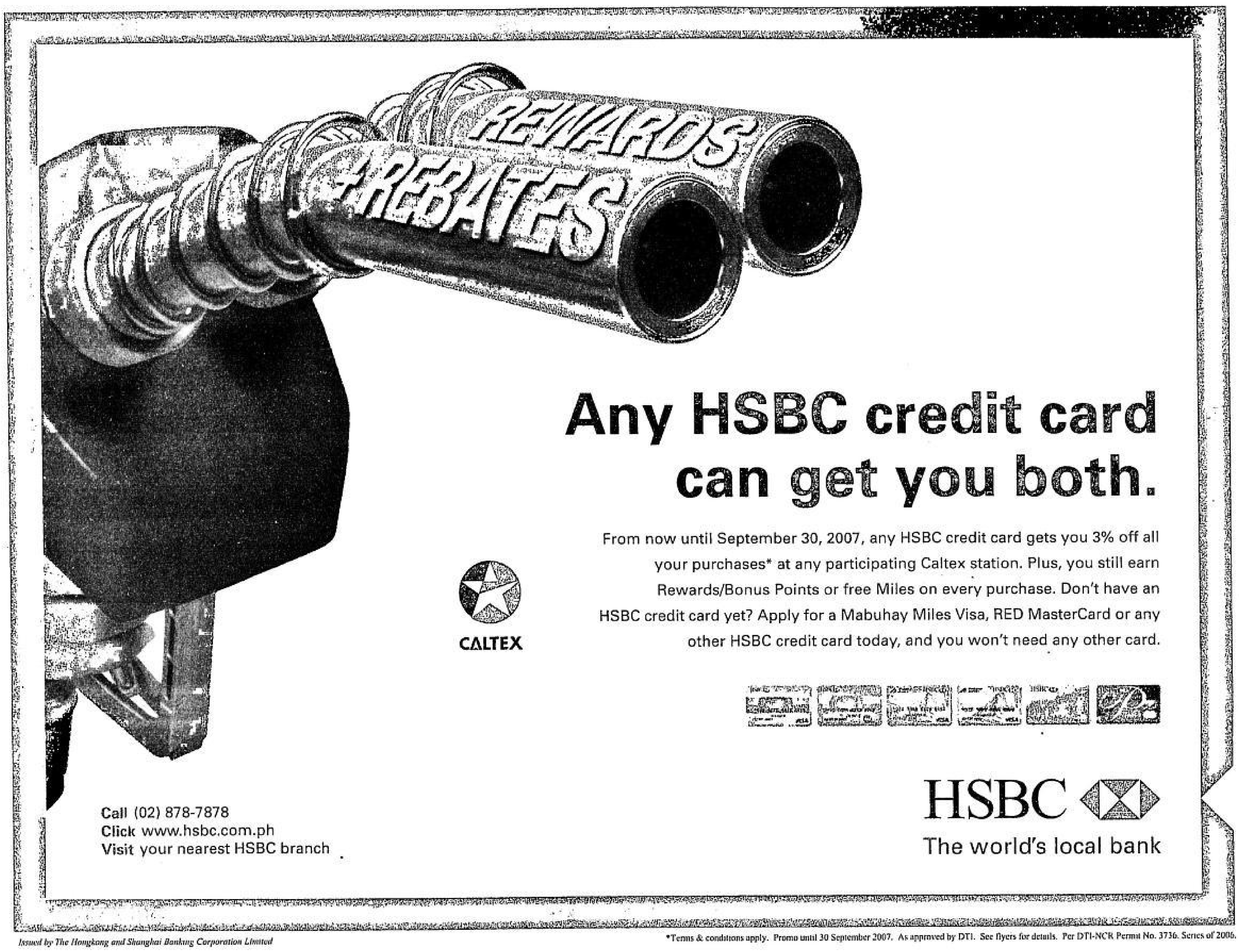
Esperon had earlier said the soldiers would go after criminals and communist rebels in those areas.

Militants, however, had charged the soldiers were there to intimidate residents and prevent them from voting for leftist party-list groups in the May elections.

On Monday, Esperon continued to justify the troop deployment, telling reporters the insurgency problem was not confined to far-flung areas.

"Now, as to who will address that in rural and urban areas, that should be left to (those) who are involved in these operations. We know the insurgency is not only in rural areas but also in urban areas," he said.

*Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac*



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MISUARI

# Nur files bid for Sulu governor

ZAMBOANGA CITY—MORO REBEL LEADER Nur Misuari was allowed out of detention yesterday to file his candidacy for governor of Sulu province.

Escorted by heavily armed police, Misuari took a commercial flight to Jolo, Sulu, where United States troops are assisting Filipino forces against Muslim militants linked to the al-Qaida international terror group.

"I am just filing my candidacy for governor of Sulu," said Misuari before boarding a plane in Manila.

"Victory is already a foregone conclusion," said the former chair of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the main Muslim insurgency that signed a peace pact with the government in 1996.

Jesus Dureza, the presidential adviser on the peace process, welcomed Misuari's move to join mainstream politics.

## Well wishes

"I positively view Nur's bid to serve through the democratic electoral process. I wish him well in his candidacy," Dureza told AFP.

Misuari and his escorts were to return to Manila later yesterday. It is not clear how he intends to campaign, but Misuari remains popular in Islamic circles in the south.

Misuari filed his candidacy certificate before Vidzfar Julie, the provincial election supervisor, in Jolo at about 9:30 a.m. yesterday.

Julie said Misuari was the second candidate to file his candidacy papers for the gubernatorial post.

The first was reelectionist governor Benjamin Loong who filed his papers on March 12.

Loong belongs to the Lakas-CMD while Misuari is considering joining Kampi. Both parties are with the majority coalition.

"There are lots of political parties offering us to join them, but my priority is Kampi, the party of the President," Misuari said.

## 'One of my dreams'

Loong welcomed Misuari's entry into the gubernatorial race.

"It's one of my dreams. I want everyone to actively participate and Misuari's entry to local governance will bring [about a] better image and impression of Sulu. It's a welcome development for the people of Sulu," said Loong in a phone interview.

Security was very tight at the Zamboanga City airport and at the Garden Orchid Hotel where Misuari was supposed to take a rest before going to Jolo.

Misuari's eight police escorts, however, allowed him to talk with journalists.

"I intend to win in the coming election. Nobody can predict what's going to happen in our future, although there are lots of indications that the people are with us," Misuari said at a press conference.

From the Commission on Election office in Jolo, Misuari proceeded to a mosque for the noontime congregational prayer.

He was scheduled to take the 3:30 p.m. Seair flight for Zamboanga and catch the 5 p.m. commercial flight for Manila.

## Peace pact

Under the 1996 peace pact, Misuari won the governorship of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), but later lost the government's support amid allegations of massive corruption in the regional government.

In 2001, he and his supporters attacked government targets on Jolo and Zamboanga City, killing more than 100 people.

MNLF gunmen then held hostage dozens of schoolchildren whom they used as human shields to stop a government assault.

The rebels later freed the hostages in exchange for safe passage back to Jolo, where they now remain as a major armed force.

Shortly after the rebellion, Misuari fled to Malaysia but was arrested and repatriated. He is under house arrest while being tried for rebellion.

A Manila court granted his request to run for governor of Sulu in the May 14 polls on the basis that he has not yet been convicted.

*Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao, and AFP*

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# Who's behind Aladin, Sambapol? Koko asks

**By Christian V. Esguerra**

NEITHER OF THEM IS REGISTERED AS A PARty-list group. But "Aladin" and "Sambapol" are all over the place, campaigning against the issue of political dynasty in the coming May elections.

Who are they and what are really they up to?

Genuine Opposition's Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III said he was intrigued by the presence of these two groups whose "advocacy" seemed focused only on two persons—fellow GO candidate Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano and himself.

"I don't know who behind them but it's clear that they're targeting only two candidates on the issue of political dynasty," he told the INQUIRER in an interview.

Pimentel and Cayetano have been heavily criticized by the groups for eyeing the Senate when family members were still sitting as incumbents. Should they win, Pimentel would join his father Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Sr. and Cayetano, his older sister Pia.

"In the end, it's the people who will decide and I am confident that the people will decide on the basis of competence," he said.

The younger Pimentel was planning to bring the issue before the Commission on Elections (Comelec), considering that both Aladin and Sambapol appeared to have so much money to spare for a "negative campaign."

Aladin stands for "Alyansa Laban sa Dinastiya" while Sambapol means "Samahan sa Bagong Pulitika."

An estimate of the two groups' "anti-Cayetano and anti-Pimentel" print advertisements alone indicated a whopping expenditure of around P40 million, the candidate said, noting that similar advertisements could also be heard in top radio stations.

Pimentel claimed the estimate easily dwarfed his P18-million budget for the entire campaign. "Who could spare such an amount for a negative ad?"

He said a check with Aladin's and Sambapol's address printed in newspaper ads showed that such offices were either abandoned or non-existent.

Pimentel said the Comelec should clarify whether "fly-by-night" groups could engage in a negative campaign against legitimate candidates. "If they can do so, does it also mean that sky's the limit for their budget?" he asked.

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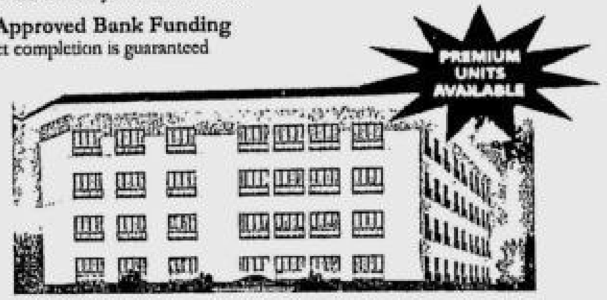

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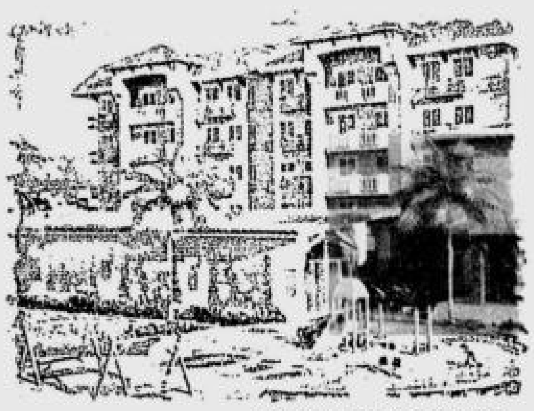

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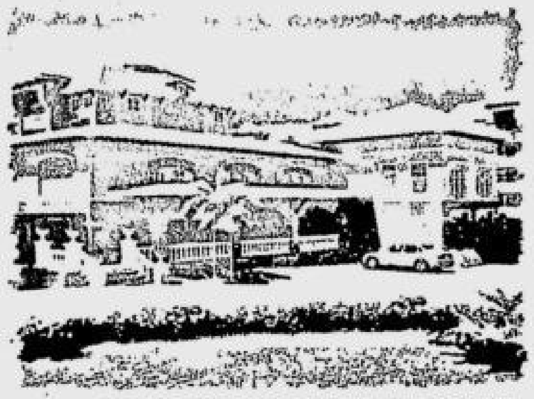

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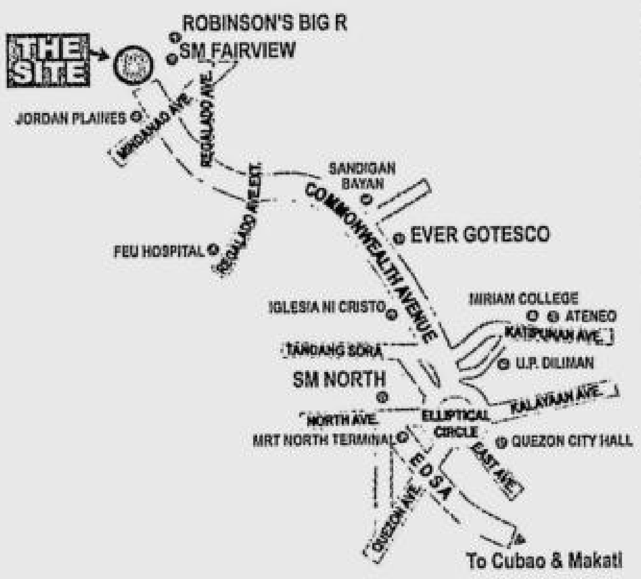

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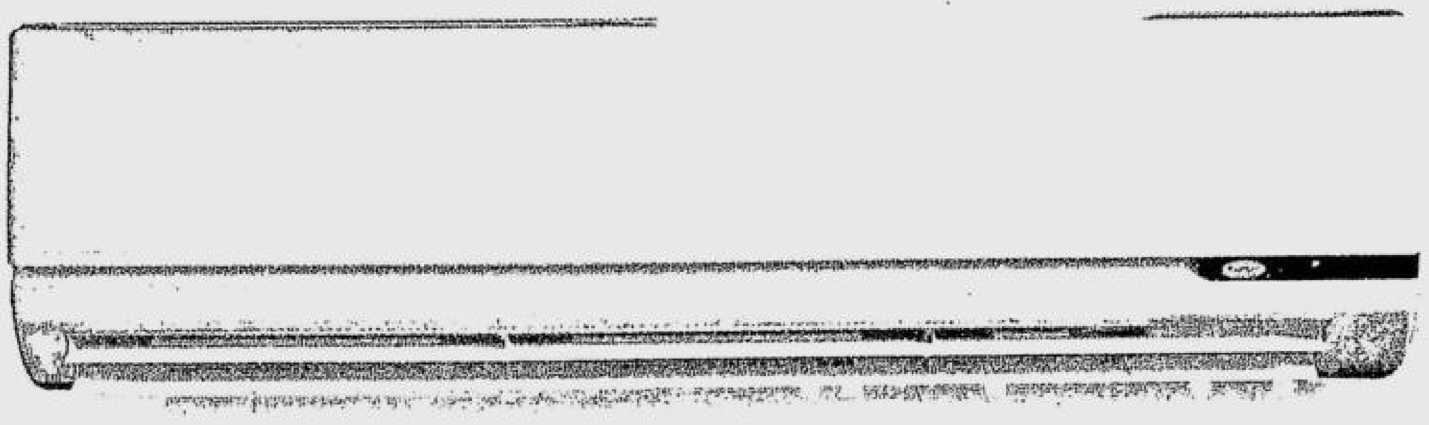

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# CHR probers clear Palparan in killings

From page A1

matter under the criminal law."

Among those cleared of liability in the killings were Col. Ricardo Visaya, Lt. Col. Noel Clement, Lt. Col. Joselito Kakilala, Lt. Col. Gregory Cayetano, Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado, 1st Lt. Roselio Cabarliza, 1st Lt. Romeo Publico, Lt. Col. Edito Nisnisan and Master Sgt. Rizal Hilario.

## Case against junior officer

But Mallari recommended the filing of appropriate cases against 1st Lt. Elmer Taglinawan, whom he said had been positively identified by a witness presented during a public inquiry on Aug. 25-26, 2006.

Attending the hearing were members of the human rights organizations Karapatan and Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny (Martyr) based in Central Luzon.

The military also gave their testimonies in a separate public hearing held on Oct. 13, 2006.

However, Mallari said the committee would conduct further investigations should new witnesses come out to shed light on the killings.

## 99.99-percent confident

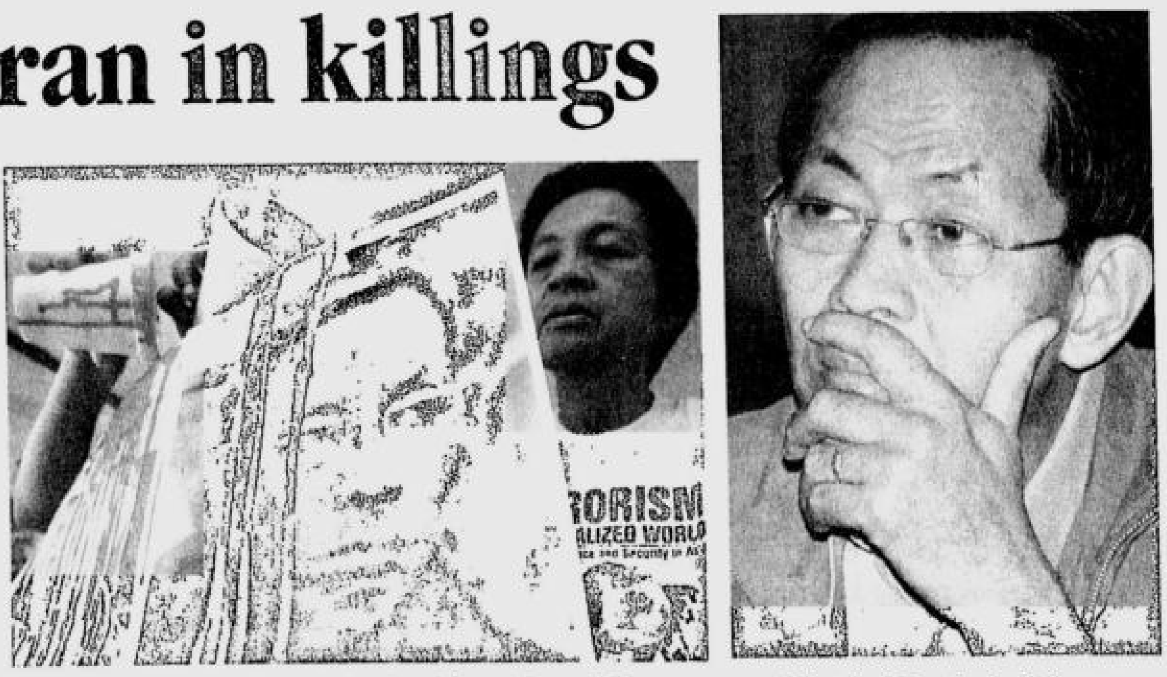
Mallari said he signed the resolution as early as Jan. 31 but did not release the findings immediately because UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston was conducting his own investigation on the extrajudicial killings in the country.

He did not want to "complicate" the situation any further, Mallari added. But he was "99.99-percent" confident that the CHR en banc would uphold his ruling.

Leftist groups have tagged Palparan, 56, a "berdugo"—butcher—for the political killings that have been reported in areas where he had been assigned. He retired in September last year.

The government-created investigative commission headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo has said Palparan could be held accountable for some of the political killings under the principle of command responsibility.

Karapatan lists more than 830 murders of government critics since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became president in 2001. The INQUIRER count is 296 murders and does not include victims of armed clashes between the military and insurgents unlike the Karapatan count.



THE HUMAN Rights Commission found no evidence linking controversial retired Gen. Jovito Palparan (right) to the extrajudicial killings in areas under his command when he was in the active service.

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INQUIRER editors fill up release forms at Police Station 10 of the Western Police District in Pandacan, Manila. From left, associate editors Rosario Garcellano and Abelardo Ulanday, publisher Isagani M. Yambot and senior desk editor Juan Sarmiento Jr. Behind are opinion editor Jorge Aruta and national editor Pergentino Bandayrel Jr.

EDWIN BACASMAS

# Inquirer publisher, 7 editors detained ...

From page A1

to Station 10 just across from the Pandacan Church, about three kilometers from the Manila City Hall, to "voluntarily surrender."

They arrived at 4 p.m. and were detained in the station's 20-square-meter holding room—which serves as a dining area for police personnel—as they waited for the order of release to be brought to the police station.

The release order was issued by Judge Virgilio M. Alameda of the Manila RTC Branch 10 to each respondent. The order arrived at 4:30 p.m. and the detainees were ushered before the station's service desk.

The INQUIRER publisher and the editors were then made to sign forms for their temporary liberty and shortly afterward the police blotter.

They were set free at about 5 p.m.

## Pressure from higher-ups

"It's a clear case of harassment of the media," said a police official who declined to be named to protect his career.

The official said the group was about to be brought to the Manila Police District (MPD) headquarters on UN Avenue where Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo is detained, but the order of release arrived at Station 10 in the nick of time.

The police official said there was pressure from "higher-ups" to transfer the editors to the MPD headquarters and detain them there.

## Unusual haste

Yambot said he and the editors were surprised by the issuance of the warrant of arrest because they did not receive the notice of resolution from the court.

"There was unusual haste in this particular case," he said. "It was the first time the justice system worked so fast."

INQUIRER lawyer Fortunato Pagdanganan said that normally, when INQUIRER respondents receive a copy of the charges through registered mail, they forward it immediately to his office.

This time, however, everyone learned about it "late," and a warrant of arrest had already been issued.

"We had not known [about it starting] from the resolution to the information and up to the arrest warrant," Pagdanganan said.

He said he initially thought the warrant of arrest was issued by Alameda only a day after the resolution was passed.

It usually takes a maximum of five days to find "probable cause," Pagdanganan said.

"From what we gathered, when the resolution was released, the next day the warrant of arrest was issued," he said. "You have to study the case well and assess if there is probable cause."

## No rush

However, the Branch 10 clerk of court, Rey Inciong, claimed there had been "no rush" to issue the warrant and that it was the respondents and their lawyers who should have kept tabs on the case.

Inciong said the case was raffled off to Alameda's sala on March 8. The order for arrest was dated March 15, which was given to the Philippine National Police on March 19.

"They could have posted bail as soon as they got the case information," Inciong said.

Manila policemen led by a Chief Inspector Dacara tried to serve the arrest warrant on the editors at the INQUIRER editorial offices in Makati at 3:25 p.m. yesterday, according to an INQUIRER security guard.

The warrant was received by human resources head Rolando Suarez on behalf of the editors.

## First time

Yambot noted that out of the 100 libel cases the INQUIRER has had filed against it, this was the first time the editors had to go through all the procedures.

Usually, he said, editors were able to post bail even before the warrants of arrest were issued.

Senior Insp. Mar Reyes, chief of the anti-crime section of Station 10, "booked" the respondents before issuing the certificate of detention.

He said the editors could not leave the premises because they were being "detained" until a release order arrived.

When the order of release from Alameda came 30 minutes later, Reyes said Magsanoc and Tulfo were not included because "they did not appear personally."

Arrest warrants against Tulfo and Magsanoc still stand unless they voluntarily turn themselves in, according to Reyes.

Pagdanganan said Magsanoc did not join the group because she was sick, while Tulfo would be posting bail for his pending libel cases all at the same time.

## Arroyo lost right to privacy

The husband of the President has filed libel cases against a total of 45 journalists.

A judge of the Manila RTC Branch 19 ruled in another libel case on March 8 that Arroyo had lost his right to privacy by virtue of the publicity generated by his being the husband of the President.

Judge Zenaida Daguna said, "The press has a privilege under the Constitution to inform the public about those who have become legitimate matters of public interest."

She said the "acts and lives of public figures are open to criticism, comments and remarks."

## Fighting back

Fighting back, a number of journalists and editors being sued by Arroyo for libel filed a class suit against him on Dec. 28, claiming that as a public figure, he was "fair game" and the subject of fair comment.

In the suit, the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, The Daily Tribune, and top editors, reporters and columnists of major broadsheets and news magazines alleged that Arroyo's libel suits were meant to "silence his critics in the press by causing a chilling effect upon the Philippine press at large."

The complainants, among them, CMFR chair Vergel Santos, Newsbreak editors Marites Vitug and Glenda Gloria, the Tribune's editor in chief Niñez Cacho-Olivarez, the paper's columnist Lito Banayo, Malaya columnist Ellen Tordesillas, and INQUIRER columnists Conrado de Quiros and Tulfo, called the move a step toward protecting the Philippine press.

# No list of official bets yet–Comelec

**By Jerome Aning**

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS YESTERday denied coming out with a final list of senatorial candidates for the coming elections.

Comelec spokesman James Arthur Jimenez said the list that media obtained the other day and later even broadcast on radio and television was an "unsigned announcement" from the agency's law department.

"It's nothing but a piece of paper that holds no worth; it has no official standing because it was not even signed by the commission en banc," Jimenez told reporters.

The list showed 37 senatorial candidates including those who are subjects of disqualification cases, namely Joselito Pepito Cayetano and Oliver Lozano of the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan party and Taguig City Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano of Genuine Opposition.

According to Jimenez, the 34 who had no pending disqualification suits were "almost sure" to be included in the final lineup, adding "they're not likely to be removed from the initial list anymore."

He said that the commission would come out with the final list "anytime this week" after resolving the various disqualification cases and the motions for reconsideration filed by some of those that Comelec earlier labeled as "nuisance" candidates.

In case the disqualification cases drag on, Jimenez said Comelec could always update the lists of official candidates. The lists, which would be placed in the precinct booths, are among the last election documents to be printed, he added.

Of the 80 people who filed certificates of candidacy for senator, 42 were declared by Comelec on March 2 as nuisance candidates. The candidacies of the rest, on the other hand, were "given due course."

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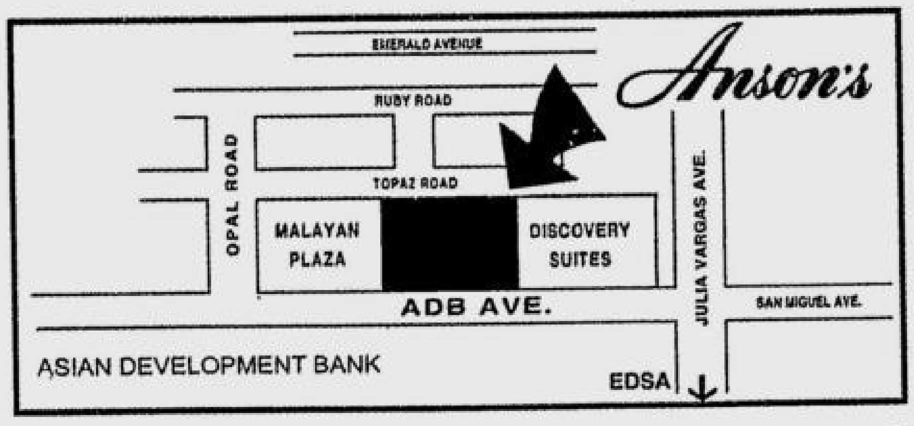

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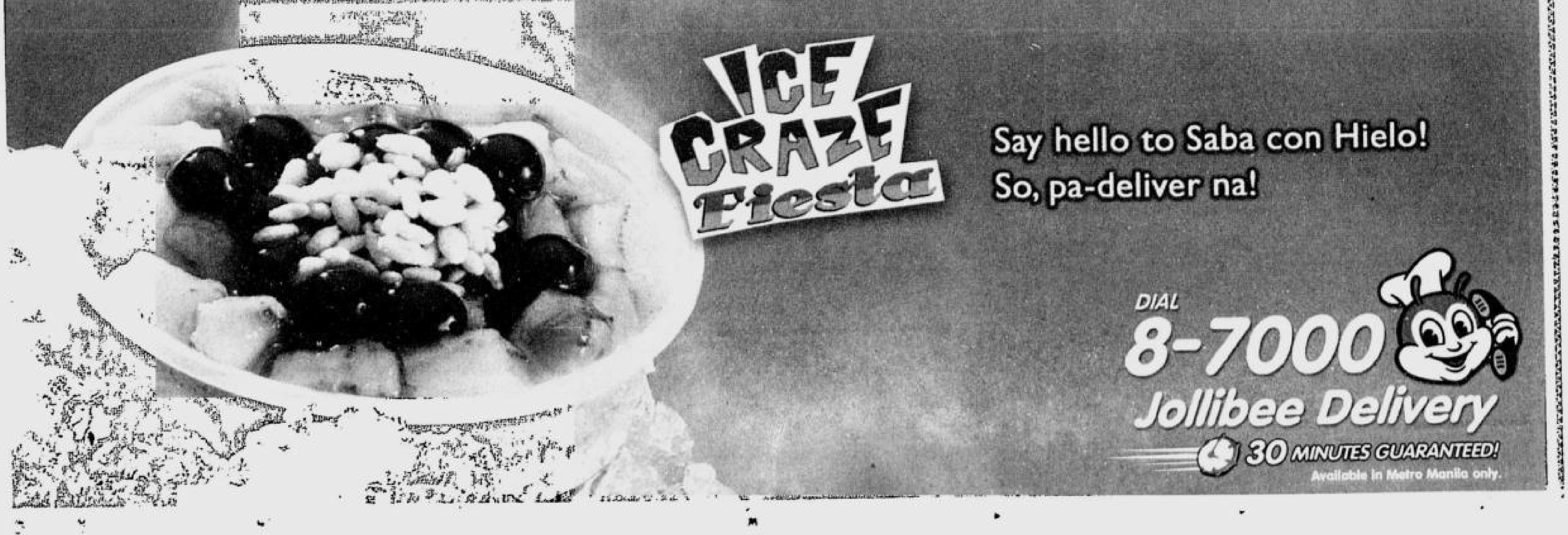


ANOTHER SHAKEUP

# Jinggoy joins shaky GO campaign

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

IN ANOTHER REORGANIZATION IN THE Genuine Opposition, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has joined his half-brother, San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, on the campaign trail, it was learned yesterday.

Estrada will be GO's liaison with local government officials since he is a former president of the League of Municipal Mayors of the Philippines, Ejercito said.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III will remain as overall campaign manager and chief media strategist, he added.

"Serge will concentrate on media because *doon kami kulang na kulang* (that's where we're falling behind). He'll concentrate on that aspect," Ejercito said.

"(Jinggoy) will help because as former president of the League of Municipal Mayors of the Philippines, he'll coordinate with local officials," he said.

Ejercito himself, the erstwhile overall campaign manager, will run the campaign in Mega Manila, which includes Metro Manila and the nearby provinces of Bulacan, Cavite and Rizal.

GO campaign spokesperson Adel Tamano said they did not have a "job title" for Estrada.

"Jinggoy is going to come in to help us. Serge said the title is not important. He himself considers his job to be more of a coordinator. And we can't move forward if JV is not with us because he's been a big help," Tamano said.

"So let's not focus too much on titles. Titles are not important to us," he said.

Last week, Ejercito announced that Osmeña was taking over as GO campaign manager on March 19.

But even before that, Osmeña had been busy figuring out their campaign approach, including their agenda, Ejercito said.

Osmeña changed the campaign strategy from sorties to having the candidates go out on their own and giving more media interviews.

"Our GO blitz is for real, it's not a bluff. We want to improve the (survey) ratings of our candidates in areas where they are not known," Ejercito said.

Former senator Ernesto Maceda and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, leaders of the United Opposition (Uno) party which is at the core of the GO coalition, will remain active in the campaign.

Maceda is helping put together the GO slate for local government positions while Binay is in charge of funding, Ejercito said.

He said GO will also be transferring its campaign headquarters from the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) office in Mandaluyong City to Makati City next week. The PMP is the party of deposed President Joseph Estrada, the father of both Senator Estrada and Ejercito.

# GO blamed for its own money woes

ADMINISTRATION SENATORIAL CANDIDATE Edgardo Angara said yesterday the Genuine Opposition's funding problem was caused by its lack of an economic platform which was scaring away donors from the business community.

Angara, a former opposition leader who is running for reelection under the Team Unity ticket, said GO's fund lack coupled with its disorganized campaign will erode its early lead in surveys of senatorial preferences.

He said the business community fears there would be instability unless both tickets could assure them they would work to improve the business climate.

GO announced last weekend the cancellation of all its campaign sorties for two weeks due to lack of funds.

Angara said funding problems had dogged the opposition since the start of the campaign. Last week, GO cancelled a rally in Nueva Ecija. Previously, rallies in Dagupan City, Iloilo City and Calamba, Laguna, were also cancelled.

Angara said GO missed the chance to present its blueprint for economic growth when it snubbed the recent debate on the economy sponsored by the business community.

"The snub showed the bankruptcy of the opposition's agenda on further improving the Philippine economy. An economic platform is meaningless and useless to them. All they are after is the removal of the President," he said.

PCCI chair Miguel Varela had said businessmen would only support candidates with logical and coherent economic programs.

He said the debate would have enabled the business community to hear the candidates' economic plans, which would have helped them decide whom to support.

Angara said the opposition not only snubbed the debates, they also insulted the business community by claiming it was biased against them.

"Now the opposition candidates must humble themselves and eat their words before they can get funding support," Angara said.

*Cynthia D. Balana*

# Ang Ladlad makes final bid

By Jerome Aning

THE ANG LADLAD GAY GROUP YESTERDAY made a last-minute appeal to the Commission on Elections to "soften the hearts" of commissioners so the group can be allowed to participate in the May 14 party-list elections.

Danton Remoto, Ang Ladlad chair and co-founder, met several Comelec commissioners behind closed doors to convince them that the group had the required national membership and represented a marginalized sector of society, as required by election law.

"I felt that some of the commissioners could be sympathetic to our cause so I made a last-minute verbal appeal, because we already filed our motion for reconsideration," Remoto told reporters.

He said the commissioners were about to come out with a ruling on their motion and wanted to ask him more questions about Ang Ladlad.

Remoto, a professor at the Ateneo de Manila University, recounted that several commissioners had questions about whether Ang Ladlad really represented a marginalized sector.

"I think that for some of them, the matter of marginalization boils down to economics, which means the fishermen, the peasants, those who are really poor," he said.

# Bro. Mike says bishops misunderstood him

By Allison W. Lopez

HE WAS MISUNDERSTOOD.

El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde said yesterday the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines "did not understand" his point when he called on the Church to come up with their shortlist of 18 senatorial candidates.

CBCP president Angel Lagdameo had reacted sharply to that suggestion in a statement on March 14, saying "dictating who to choose was as bad as buying votes."

"My suggestion was not to endorse but to provide a guide to lay leaders to choose the proper candidates," said Velarde in a phone interview. He added that he just wanted them to "trim down" the list from 33 to 18.

Velarde said he had no plans of "appealing" his suggestion, and that he respected CBCP's stand on the issue.

This, however, will not prevent him from releasing his own list of 18 "chosen ones" to his loyal flock.

"Definitely, *meron* (there will be one)," he said.

Velarde said six senatorial candidates have already approached him, and so far, they were all "good."

He declined to reveal the names of the six, but when prodded, he said one was "independent" while the rest belonged to the two main parties.

"I'm doing an initial assessment now," he said, adding that he could only evaluate the ones who went to him personally. "How can I assess them if they don't come to me?"

Velarde said his criteria for choosing candidates comes from the acronym "Buhay"—which means bravery, unwavering commitment, honesty, ability, and Yahweh or being God-fearing.

Velarde said he will release his list about two weeks before the elections—but only to his estimated five million followers and not to the general public.

# 2 detainees on hunger strike at BI Bicutan jail

By Julie M. Aurelio

AT LEAST TWO FOREIGNERS—A Spaniard and a German—detained at the Bureau of Immigration jail in Bicutan are on hunger strike to protest slow justice and "gulag-like" prison conditions, including the lack of medical attention which they claim led to the death of a Chinese national the other day.

It is the third hunger strike over human rights violations and social justice issues to hit the news in the past month. Farmers began a protest fast last February in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform to protest government lack of political will to enforce land reform, while a group of political detainees dubbed the "Tagaytay 5" are protesting inhuman prison conditions.

The immigration detainees protest, which has been going on for more than a week and threatened to erupt into a riot after one detainee died on Monday, drew a personal visit from the German ambassador Axel Weishaupt yesterday to the BID jail yesterday.

When contacted by the INQUIRER, German embassy press officer Rolf Saligmann confirmed that one of their nationals was on a hunger strike and had complained of prison conditions.

"We will take it up with the proper authorities," Saligmann said.

The names of the hunger strikers could not be confirmed as immigration authorities barred media from entering the immigration jail.

An immigration official said he was not aware of anything going on.

The detention center is currently holding around 168 foreigners representing 40 nationalities, mostly from China, India, Spain, Germany and Polland.

There were also reports that embassies of other European Union states would also be sending diplomatic notes regarding human rights violations in the BID camp.

One BID detainee who was contacted by INQUIRER by phone, but who asked not to be identified, said the detainees were complaining about the "deplorable conditions of their confinement" in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig.

"For one, we are complaining about the lack of health care here," the detainee said.

Detainees feel the death of a Chinese national known to them as Lee Chong was due to "lack of medical attention."

According to the detainee, the Chinese man broke his leg after a fall from his upper bunk a couple of weeks ago. "It took two hours before a doctor looked at him and gave him a few pills and a bandage. Then no follow up. This man could not speak English and he apparently had no money. On Monday he died."

## Clinic with nothing inside

The detainee further complained that though the BID detention facility has a clinic, "there is nothing inside."

"No first aid, no doctor, no nurse, only four walls and two cabinets. Not even a fire extinguisher," he said.

"This is a matter of human rights, and BID does not take responsibility," he said.

He also told the INQUIRER that two detainees with "advanced cases of tuberculosis" wander around the detention center, posing a health risk to the other foreigners.

"They are not even given medicine. Their sickness is contagious and no one is attending to them."

He, however, added that the German Embassy facilitated the visit of a doctor two days ago to check the health of the detainees.

"Normally we have to negotiate on who will pay for the gasoline to be able to take the sick people to the immigration doctor," the foreigner said.

Aside from poor medical facilities, the detainee also protested the intermittent water supply, which only lasts to 1 ½ hours each day.

"Imagine more than 160 people rushing everyday to get a shower," the detainee said, adding that they pay P50 for their drinking water every week.

He said the detention facility has a deep well, but the pressure is not enough to supply water to the second floor of the two dormitory-type buildings.

Each building houses four rooms. A floor is allocated for the female detainees, he said. The men are separated from the 18 female detainees at nighttime.

## 'Bartolina'

He added that each room has 20 beds, but in some cases, as much as 23 people are crammed into each space. Some detainees are forced to sleep on the floor.

He himself sleeps on one of the bunks without a mattress.

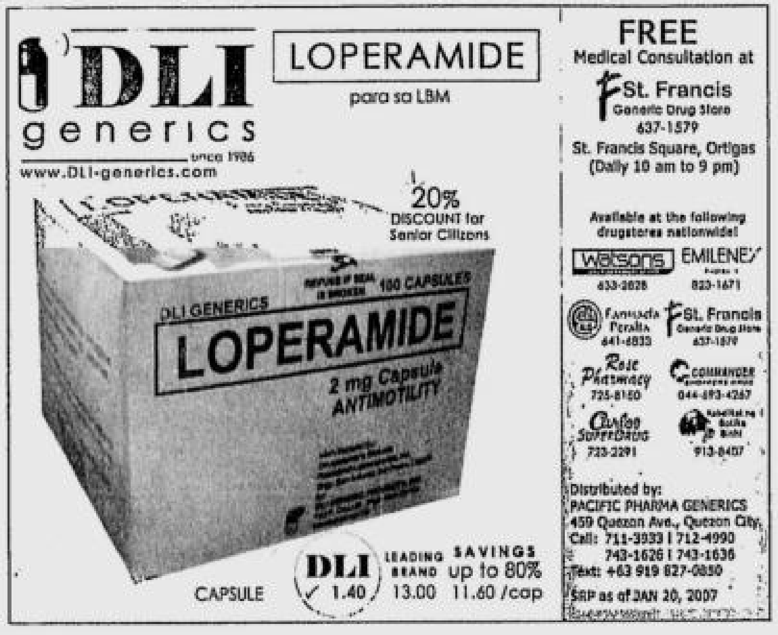
He added that the prison has a solitary confinement cell or "bartolina" which has no water supply, lights or even a blanket for the inmate inside. Only a toilet bowl stands in the middle of the 1.2 meter by 1.2 meter cell.

Meals are served three times a day. For breakfast, they have coffee and a piece of pan de sal. Lunch and dinner consist of a cup of rice and chicken or sardines.

He said they are allowed to cook their own food, but at their own expense. "We spend our money not for luxury, but to survive," he said.

The strikers want the BID to give them fair consideration.

The slow legal process is another woe. It was reported that one detainee has been there for 10 years without a hearing.



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NOTICE TO MAYNILAD WATER CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC

The Metropolitan Waterworks & Sewerage System Regulatory Office in Resolution No. 07-002-CA dated March 14, 2007, as approved and confirmed by the MWSS Board Resolution No. 2007-063 dated March 16, 2007, has granted Maynilad Water a Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment (FCDA) of -1.35% of the Basic Charge (P22.47 per cubic meter) or a P 0.30 per cubic meter downward tariff adjustment for the 2nd Quarter 2007.

For a family of five consuming an average of 30 cubic meters a month, this translates to a reduction of P3.09 in their monthly water bill.

The reduction of the FCDA is due to the continued appreciation of the peso against the dollar arising from the gains being made by the country's strong economy. Thus, the FCDA amounting to –P0.14 per cubic meter in the previous quarter is further reduced by P0.16 per cubic meter, resulting in an FCDA of –P0.30 per cubic meter for the 2nd quarter of 2007 or -1.35% of the basic tariff (P22.47 per cubic meter).

FCDA is a mechanism granted to utility companies to allow them to adjust the prices charged for their services given the fluctuations in the foreign exchange rates that impact on the company's loans and foreign denominated borrowings. The FCDA is adjusted upwards if the peso depreciates, and downwards if the peso appreciates. The FCDA mechanism is based on the principle of "no over or no under recovery".

In the case of Maynilad Water, the company pays foreign exchange denominated Concession Fees to the MWSS, as well as loans taken for service improvement projects to expand and modernize the company's water and sewerage services for its more than 650,000 household-consumers, commercial and industrial establishments and provide individual water service connections to those living in blighted communities under Maynilad's Bayan Tubig program which, as of now, benefits more than 102,000 households.

Maynilad's concession area covers the cities of Manila (all but portions of San Andres & Sta Ana), Quezon (west of San Juan River, West Avenue, EDSA, Congressional, Mindanao Ave: the northern part starting from the Districts of the Holy Spirit & Batasan Hills), Makati (west of South Super Hi-way), Caloocan, Pasay, Paranaque, Las Pinas, Muntinlupa and Valenzuela, and the towns of Navotas and Malabon all in Metro Manila; Cavite City, and the towns of Bacoor, Imus, Kawit, Noveleta and Rosario, all in Cavite Province.

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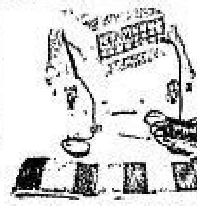

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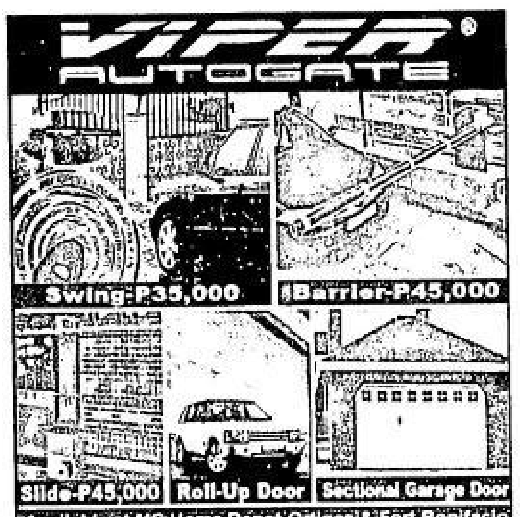

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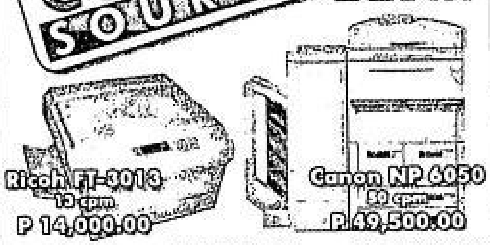

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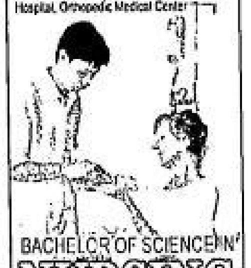

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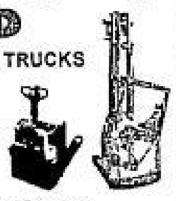

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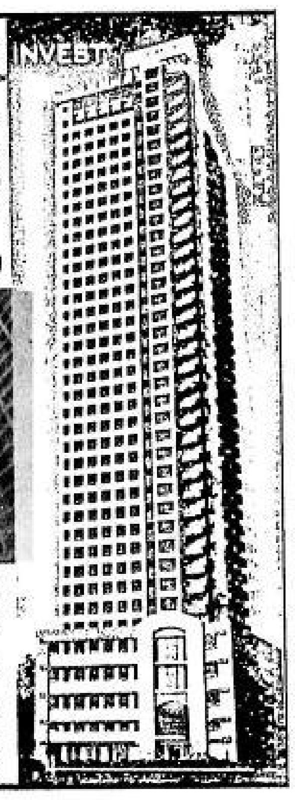

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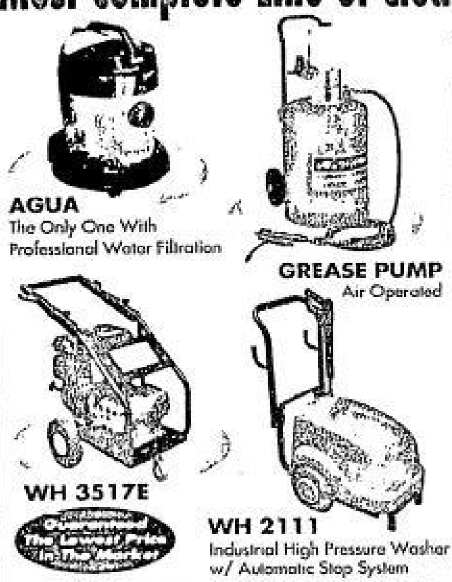

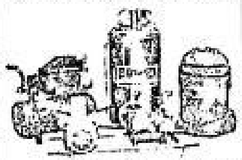

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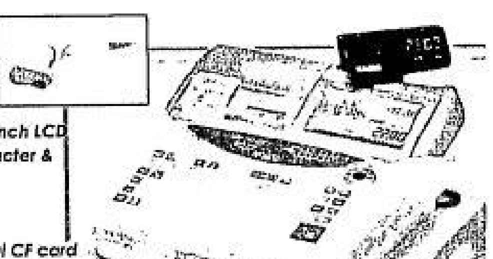

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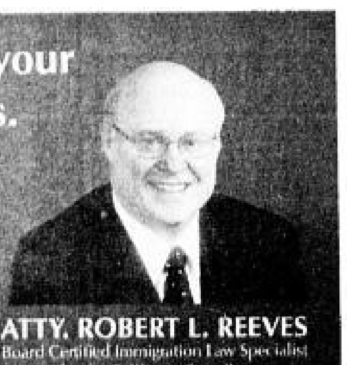

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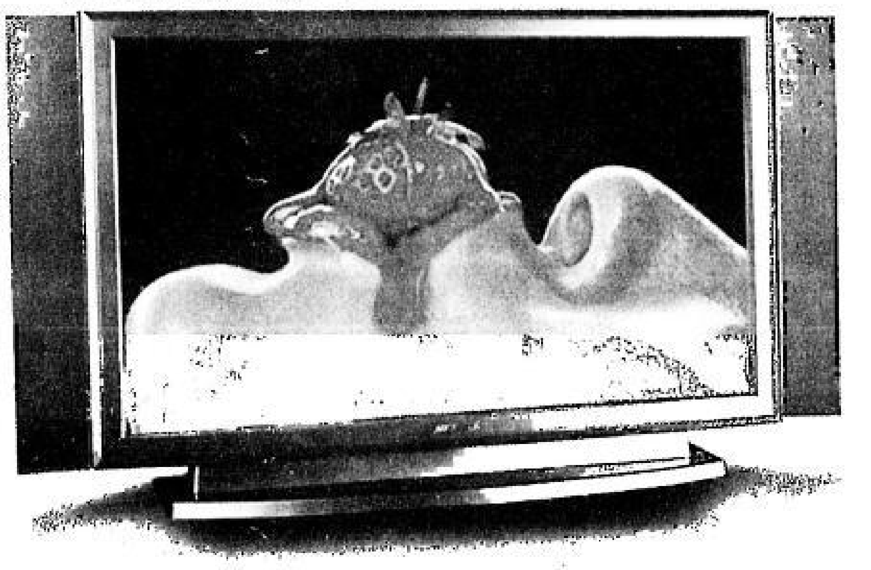

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# General does an Atong

From page A1

Ang had earlier struck a plea bargain with the antigraft court, which included returning the P25 million he had taken from the P130 million in tobacco excise taxes that he "delivered" to Estrada.

With the deal, Ang avoided a possible prison sentence of up to 40 years.

### Offered assets

The assets being offered—with total value amounting to P20,930,115.96—are also under the names of Ligot's wife Erlinda and their children Paolo, Riza and Miguel, and Ligot's sister Miguela Ligot-Paragas.

Among those lined up for the proposed compromise agreement are a Toyota Hi-Lux pickup worth P1.078 million and an Isuzu Elf truck worth P305,000.

Also offered are pieces of real estate in Bukidnon—three corn farms worth P461,620; poultry buildings and a rest house worth P4.5 million); a farm lot worth P195,000; and a building covering 8,960 square meters and worth P6.715 million.

But in reference to the last building, which was apparently listed among the Ligot assets in a House inquiry in 2005, Zulueta and Zialcita said: "As far as the Ligots know, there was no such property." They said the amount of P6.715 million did not reflect in any of the documentary evidence included in the proposal.

**LIGOT: Settlement offer marked confidential.** JOAN BONDOC

"However, if such a property is shown to exist, the Ligots are willing to have this property sold," the lawyers said.

### Condo, houses

Ligot's condominium unit (worth more than P507,000) at the Bonifacio Conversion and Development Authority as well as real property in California (a house in Buena Park and another in Anaheim) worth P6.468 million are also part of the offer.

The lawyers said that the amount quoted for the US assets was only 30 percent of the purchase price representing the down payment, and that only $132,000 was returned to the Ligots when the houses were sold.

"Nevertheless, as a sign of good faith, the Ligots would like to offer the amount of $132,000 as part of the settlement...," the lawyers said, adding that the US assets were acquired and held in trust by Erlinda Ligot.

Farm machinery and structures make up the rest of the offered assets.

Ligot is under a hold-departure order. But his current whereabouts could not immediately be ascertained.

# Plan on Satur so secret cops didn't know who target was

**By Tarra Quismundo**

A SECRET GOVERNMENT PLAN to transfer Rep. Satur Ocampo from Manila to Leyte was kept so confidential that not even the policemen on the ground supposed to be involved in the operation knew who the subject was.

Information gathered by the INQUIRER yesterday also indicated that while Philippine National Police Chief Director General Oscar Calderon was telling media that Ocampo would be given a chance to ask the Supreme Court to defer his transfer to Leyte, plans were already in place for him to be flown out of Manila.

The heavy handed methods police used when they finally put the plan into effect before dawn on Monday provoked heavy criticisms.

A Cessna plane flew Ocampo out of the Manila but the operation misfired after Leyte Judge Ephrem Abando, who is handling the case, ordered the authorities to keep the congressman in the capital, forcing the Cessna plane to turn back and return to the capital.

### 3 options

An airport official who was part of the planning process said that on Sunday, top officials of the Department of Interior and Local Government, the PNP and the Manila International Airport Authority prepared three options for Ocampo's transfer to the remote Hilongos town of Leyte.

The multiple murder charges, filed before a Hilongos judge, involved the alleged killings by communist rebels of suspected military spies in the mid-1980s.

The plan was crafted "like a military and police operation," said the official, who asked not to be identified because of the delicate nature of his position.

"We had three plans. The first was for him to take a commercial flight, the 6 a.m. flight of PAL (the Philippine Airlines) to Tacloban, then the helicopter, then the Cessna. The three were ready," said the source.

The source, who helped coordinate the transfer, said there was an agreement among those in the top rung of the agencies involved to keep the information to themselves, and those on the ground were to be kept in the dark about the details.

### Plan A

"The day before, they (lower-ranking officials, security guards and policemen) were informed but they were not told who the subject was," said the official.

"They didn't know but we did, because we and the PNP already had an agreement that in giving instructions to other agencies, we will not tell [who] the subject [is]."

Asked why, official said: "So that the information will not spread out, to avoid publicity."

On the morning the plan was carried out, a security guard at a gate of the domestic airport told the INQUIRER his superiors merely advised him and the others on Sunday night about an early arrival for Monday.

"They did not say who it was," said the guard.

In line with the "Plan A," Ocampo was booked on PAL flight PR191 for Tacloban along with nine police escorts.

But Ocampo did not board the plane "because we were waiting for the judge's decision," said the official.

### Plan B

"The DILG Secretary had talked to the judge and was told the court will issue an order but there was none... So we extended the time of waiting."

Plan "B" was to have Ocampo board a PNP chopper that would go straight to Hilongos. The chopper was to stop in Legazpi, Albay to refuel and head for Hilongos, roughly three hours by land from the Tacloban airport.

### Last option

By 9 a.m., there was still no order from the judge. Two PNP helicopters that had flown into the airport at 7:45 a.m. for the Plan B option were then ordered to go ahead and fly to Tacloban, where they would rendezvous with Ocampo's party later.

"The helicopters were told to tow fetch [Ocampo] from the Tacloban airport and fly him and his police escorts to Hilongos," the official said.

With still no word from Judge Abando, all that was left was "Plan C," which entailed flying Ocampo on a private plane for Tacloban.

A check with the Air Transportation Office's Tacloban tower showed that the control tower was advised as early as 9 a.m. of the day's lone chartered flight from Manila.

"Before noon, Secretary Puno called the judge and we learned there was no decision yet. That's why the Secretary decided to push through with the [Cessna] flight," the source said.

About an hour and a half earlier, the judge had said on radio that he had already issued an order stopping the PNP from bringing Ocampo to Hilongos.

The government group, still waiting at the domestic airport for a copy of the court order, had a fax machine on standby.

"When they were already in the air—that was around 2 p.m.—that's the time we received the fax that the judge has already decided. The flight was called back," said the official.

# Cory amnesty key ...

From page A1

committed from purely personal motives."

Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, the son of the former President and a senatorial candidate of the Genuine Opposition, said the 1987 amnesty fulfilled a promise made by his mother when she ran against the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in the February 1986 snap election.

### Protests over Ocampo arrest

The amnesty proclamation also later led to peace talks between the government and the communists. The talks broke down after protesting farmers were shot and killed by soldiers on Mendiola Bridge in 1987.

Representative Aquino, who was here on Tuesday for the Baguio leg of his campaign, said he had yet to speak to his mother about Ocampo's case, which ignited protests after a Leyte court ordered his arrest.

"How is it possible and what mechanism did they employ to make Satur Ocampo liable for these crimes? He was under custody at the time, so again we wonder why this matter was not resolved first before the court issued a warrant of arrest," Aquino said.

### Identities of the accusers

"No offense meant to the family of the victims, but again [there are] certain rights that should be enjoyed by everybody in this country," he said.

He accused the Arroyo administration of carrying out the same tactics employed by late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in silencing his political enemies.

Loste said Bayan Muna was confident it could obtain Ocampo's freedom given the legal flaws of the Leyte case.

Bayan Muna and human rights groups have identified the 12 Leyte residents who sued Ocampo, as well as the identities of the six witnesses who claimed that Ocampo personally ordered the murder of seven people in Leyte in 1985.

Loste said his group was filing perjury charges against Ocampo's accusers.

### Shades of antiterror law

In Manila, Sen. Mar Roxas warned that the Arroyo administration's "clear violation" of Ocampo's human rights could be a portent of things to come when the antiterror law takes effect.

In a speech before the Rotary of Makati, Roxas said: "This is not, in anyway, to say that he (Ocampo) is guilty or innocent. Clearly, civil liberties and human rights have been violated here. Clearly, you would not want that to happen to you or to anybody else in our society."

Roxas, one of only two senators that dissented against the antiterror bill in the Senate, said in a phone interview: "All I'm saying is we should stand up to these human rights abuses."

### Poor governance

He said that the shabby treatment of Ocampo could be a preview of how the government planned to implement the antiterror law.

"It's clear in the handling of this case that powers have been abused," Roxas said. "This shows that there's no predictability in the implementation of laws. It's not good governance which prevailed in this case. Let us not inject politics and ideology in this."

Bayan Muna's reelectionist Rep. Teodoro Casiño said Ocampo's arrest and Monday's failed government attempt to move him to Leyte were boosting the party-list group's chances of again landing seats in Congress.

"Sympathy is growing among the general public," he told the INQUIRER. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Michael Lim Ubac, Christian V. Esguerra, PDI Research and from Donna Demetillo and Maurice Malanes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

# *Palace denies role in Satur fiasco, tells PNP to explain*

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño**

MALACAÑANG HAS DENIED INvolvement in Monday's police attempt to forcibly transfer Rep. Satur Ocampo to a jail in Leyte and directed the Philippine National Police to explain the fiasco involving the sudden turnaround and return to Manila of a Leyte-bound plane carrying the lawmaker.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirmed that the arrest of Ocampo was discussed in a meeting of the Cabinet cluster on national security.

"This being just a judicial matter, the report [of the PNP on Ocampo's arrest] was merely noted by the Cabinet cluster and no decision was made," Bunye told reporters.

Bunye said the security cluster was engaged in "strategic policy discussions impinging on national security, not on criminal litigations or proceedings."

"The Cabinet cluster meeting took place before (Ocampo's arrest)—no meeting afterwards—so I think it is incumbent upon the PNP to explain what really happened," he said.

"I think the public needs to know what happened."

**OCAMPO**

The military says it has a witness that would place Ocampo, facing multiple murder charges following the discovery of a mass grave of suspected military spies in Leyte, at the scene of the crime.

Military information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said yesterday the witness was expected to testify that Ocampo was in Leyte "sometime in 1985," around the time when the supposed communist purges began in the province.

Bartolome said this would dispute Ocampo's claim that he could not have ordered the alleged killings of the spies because at the time of the supposed crime more than 20 years ago, he was being held in prison by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

He claimed Ocampo was "free to go around" the country from the time he escaped from his jailers (in May 1985) until he was re-arrested in 1987.

"He was free to go around and also it was during that period that the mass murder in Inopacan, Leyte began," Bacarro told reporters.

Court documents said the killings in Leyte occurred from 1984 to 1986.

Bacarro said the witness had "confirmed" Ocampo's presence in Leyte in 1985 and that the latter was there allegedly to order the purges.

Bacarro did not want to give further details, saying this was a matter for the court. But he said the military had a "credible" witness against Ocampo and the others.

Bacarro rejected claims by the Ocampo side that the 20-year period for filing the murder cases had lapsed, saying the case had not yet prescribed.

He said that under the penal code, the period of prescription of an offense "commences from the day from which the crime was discovered." In this case, he said the military discovered the Leyte mass grave only in August last year.

"So it's only from this period that we begin to count," Bacarro said.

# I am my own man, says Leyte judge

From page A1

litical and security rigmarole when he upheld Ocampo's petition to be allowed to remain in Manila until the Supreme Court heard his motion challenging his arrest on Friday.

"No one can pressure me. I act and decide, based on my decisions and not from anyone else. This case, I found probable cause based on the resolution of the provincial prosecutor's office in Baybay (Leyte)," Abando said.

The prosecutor filed the complaint against Ocampo, Communist Party of the Philippines founding chair Jose Ma. Sison and about 50 others for 15 counts of murder after a mass grave was reported in Inopacan town on Aug. 26 last year.

### 1984-86 killings

According to military officers, the 67 skeletal remains found in the grave were those of victims of communist purges of suspected government spies. Court documents said the killings occurred from 1984 to 1986.

**HILONGOS JUDGE Ephrem Abando confers with Bayan Muna legal counsel Neri Colmenares after upholding Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo's petition to be allowed to remain in Manila.** JANI ARNAIZ/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Some of those buried were supposedly residents of Hilongos, a hotbed of communist insurgency in Eastern Visayas in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Ocampo has dismissed the charges as a fabrication and part of administration efforts to derail the campaign of his party-list group.

### Life-changing experience

Abando stressed he would decide the case in accordance with evidence. His jurisdiction covers the towns of Baybay, Bato, Inopacan, Hindang, Matalom and Hilongos.

The judge knew ordering the arrest of Ocampo and the others could be a life-changing experience.

"I knew from the start that the accused are not only high-profile personalities but at the same time, considered security risks. And this includes my own security," Abando said.

The judge drives a motorcycle to his office, barely a kilometer away from his house. He turned down a police offer of a security escort, saying he does not need any, at least this time.

### Media attention

Senior Supt. William Valencia, Leyte police director, said he wanted Abando to have at least two security personnel. "The offer still stands," Valencia said.

The 43rd Infantry Battalion is tasked with securing the town from threats from the New People's Army.

Abando, who hails from this agricultural town of over 55,200 people, said he was a little bit shocked by the media attention he had been getting since the multiple murder case was assigned to him.

He described himself as a family man, but he declined to give details about his family "for security reasons."

Before he was appointed to his present position in 2002, Abando was an assistant provincial prosecutor of Southern Leyte for three years. He served as election officer of Tacloban City from 1998 to 2000.

He completed his elementary and secondary education in public schools of this town. While a law student at the Leyte Colleges, he worked at the then Ministry of the Interior and Local Government for seven years. He passed the bar in 1981.

***DAHIL SA ATING MGA GURO, NAKAMIT NATIN ANG ATING MGA PANGARAP. SILA AY TUNAY NA MGA BAYANI. SINO NAMAN KAYA ANG MAGPAPAKABAYANI PARA SA KANILA?***

**VOTE**

**ABAKADA GURO**

**PARTY-LIST**

(COMELEC RESOLUTION dated February 13, 2007, in Case No. SPP No. 04-025(PL), approved the change of name of the party list Advocates and Adherents of Social Justice for School Teachers and Allied Workers, or AASJS, to **ABAKADA GURO** with **ABAKADA** as acronym).

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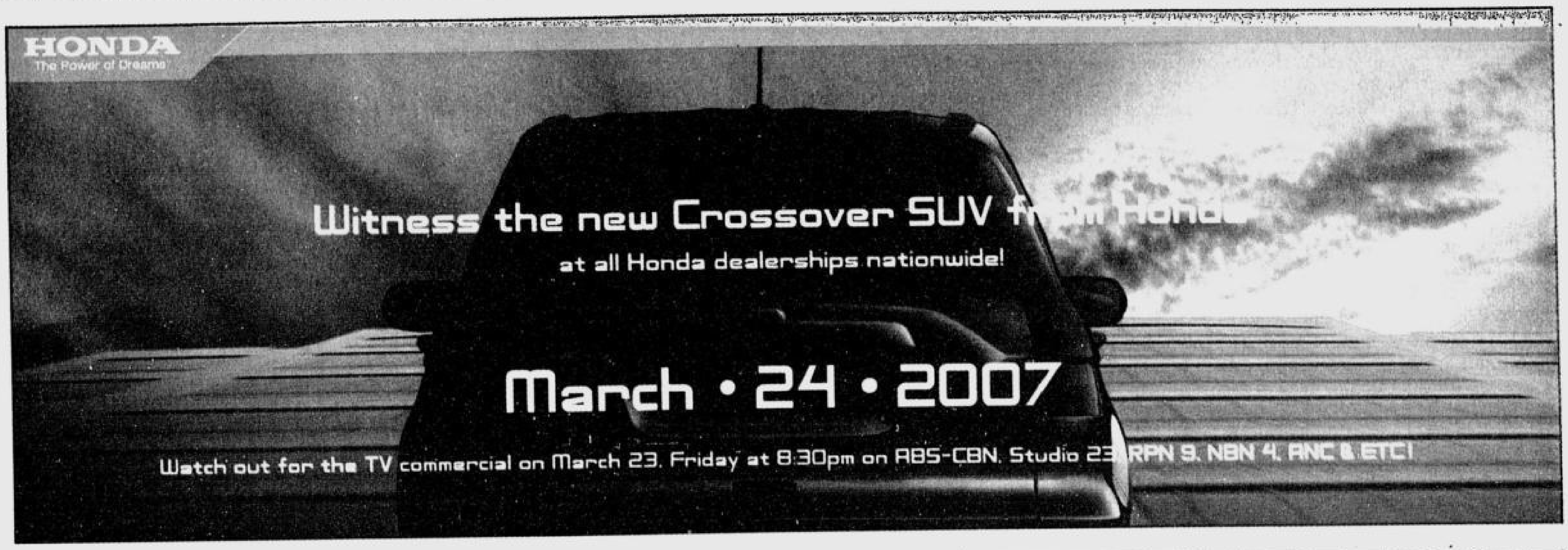
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# OPINION

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•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
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## Gestapo

**EDITORIAL**

THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER REP. SATUR Ocampo should face trial; rather, it is how he is being carted around to face the courts. The problem is not that he is being made to face charges—because he has himself manfully faced the charges—but the attitude of his custodians. What should make the public anxious is not that justice is being served; it should be the injudicious way Ocampo's case is being handled by the government.

Let us begin with the improper conduct of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. who has taken to issuing statements about the justice system when the armed services he commands have their own system of military justice. By and large, civilians leave that system well enough alone, and he should do likewise with regard to the civilian courts on which he has neither competence nor personality to comment.

"Let's not give any color to that," Esperon said when reporters inquired why there was an attempt to spirit Ocampo away to the Visayas practically in the dead of night. Esperon declaimed, "Isn't it good to do things early, rather than late? As a responsible congressman or a high official, he should answer the charges since there is a warrant of arrest out for him." Which completely ignores the point—and betrays Esperon's lack of competence to meddle in this case.

Ocampo has a pending appeal to the Supreme Court for a temporary restraining order to stop his transfer to the Visayas. Whether or not the authorities believe that the absence of such a TRO at this point permits them to transfer Ocampo, fair play dictates that if they want to uphold their position, they must do so while according Ocampo's lawyers every chance to intervene in the interest of their client. Ocampo was awakened before dawn, and was going to be moved without so much as a chance for him to inform his lawyers or for them to attend to him; and he ended up transported not even in a government vehicle but on a private jet.

Which brings up disturbing aspects in the behavior of those who are in power for now. Doing things in the dead of night—when media, the public and the legal profession are mostly asleep—is a bad habit that has come to characterize this administration. This isn't just undemocratic behavior, it is sneaky and cowardly. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez bluntly calls Ocampo's Supreme Court petition "a big headache for us." And there lies the reason behind such moves—if something might upset the public, do it behind the public's back.

Disturbing, too, is the use of private facilities for public purposes. Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus, asked about the rush to bring Ocampo to Leyte (only to rush the prisoner back when Leyte Judge Ephrem Abando instructed that Ocampo's appearance before his sala be deferred), said the government did not spend for Ocampo's flight. It was paid out of the pocket of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno. Why Puno should be so generous with his personal funds in pursuit of a policy Palace insiders claim Puno opposed as politically unwise boggles the mind.

But that's not as mind-boggling as the whole thing. To repeat: the surreptitious transfer, by private means, of a public official who has lodged a petition with the Supreme Court—at a time when the lawyers of the accused couldn't intervene, and the public had no means of knowing what was really happening, and when, as it turned out, even the judge, before whom the accused was being rushed to face, had deferred the appearance until a superior court could decide on the petition before it—smacks of what can only be called "Gestapo tactics."

Which should serve as a cautionary tale, as if any more were needed, on why the military should stop issuing pronouncements on civilian justice, and why this country needs justice secretaries like Gonzalez, who view the justice system as a hassle, like a hole in the head. The greatest hindrance to the rule of law is a military that insists on a military justice system but which doesn't respect the civilian justice system; a justice secretary who views the laws as an inconvenience; and an administration that coddles officials who are reducing the justice system into an instrument for vengeance.

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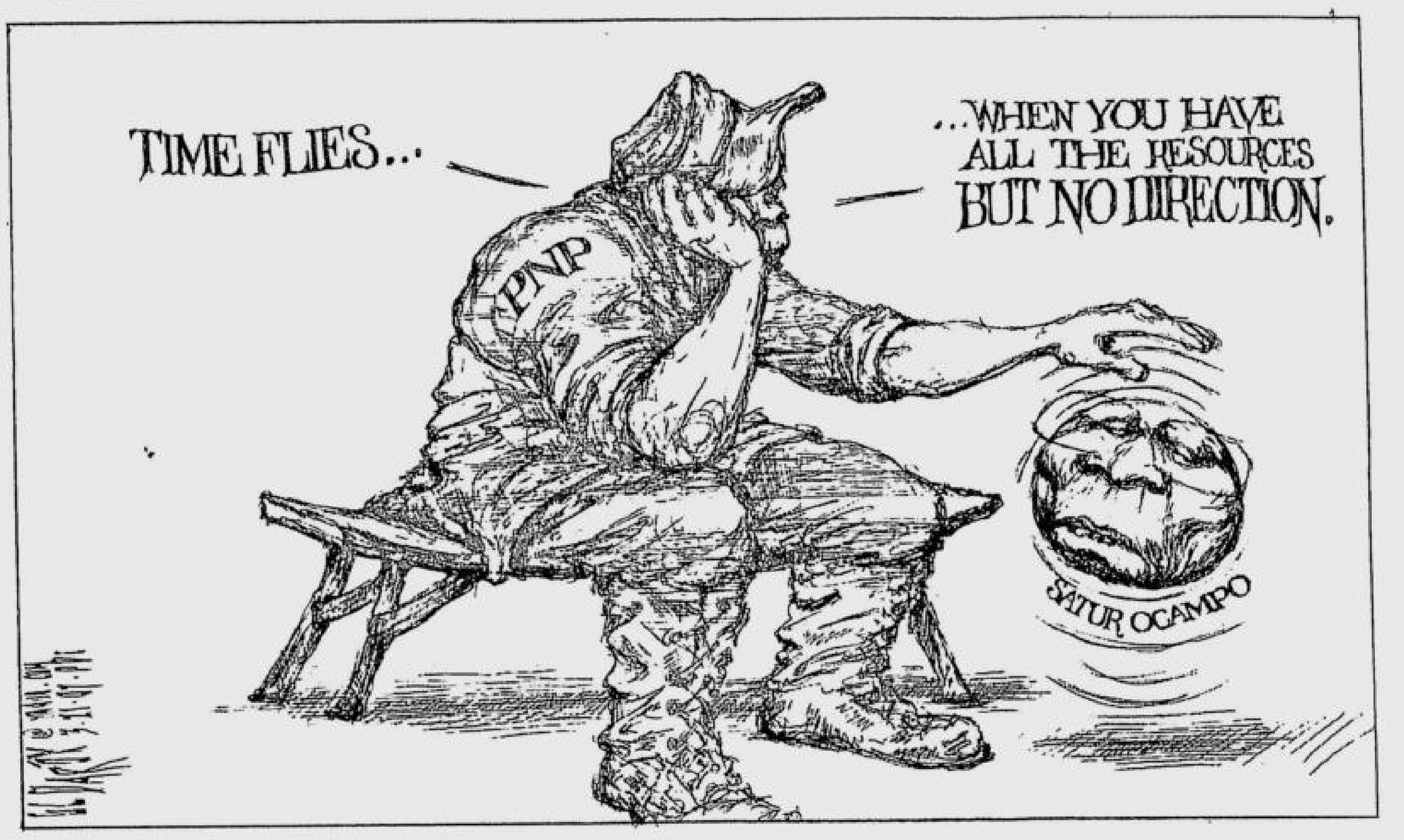
TIME FLIES...
...WHEN YOU HAVE ALL THE RESOURCES BUT NO DIRECTION.
PNP
SATUR OCAMPO

## Something big to happen on April 23

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

ISN'T THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM BEING abused? Under the very liberal policies of the Commission on Elections, any Tom, Dick and Harry can organize his own party list and have himself and his relatives elected to Congress.

The party-list system was intended to give the marginalized sectors of the citizenry, like the farmers and fishermen, representation in the House of Representatives.

But under Comelec rules, it is open season to any party-list group. The only thing necessary is one's inventiveness in coining names for parties. Under the same rules, any group of persons with the same occupation can form its own party even if its members don't belong to the marginalized sectors of society. Lawyers, for example, can have their own party list even if the majority of congressmen are already lawyers.

Many groups have taken advantage of the loose rules. Among those being considered for party-list accreditation by the Comelec are several parties whose names all begin with the word "Angat," raising the suspicion that the people behind them are the same. In a survey, the leading party-list groups are all militant organizations (Bayan Muna, Gabriela, Akbayan, etc.) Isn't this duplication?

And what about the FPJPM party, which is supposed to be the party of the followers of the late Fernando Poe Jr.? Not to disparage FPJ, but are his followers so marginalized that they deserve a party list all for themselves?

Let's face it, the party-list system is, for some people, just a shortcut to Congress where they can partake of the largesse that House members routinely steal from taxpayers. All the party-list representatives collect pork barrel allocations that they used to denounce. Some even complain that their allocations should not be less than those of the regular congressmen. Which goes to show that party-list representatives are no better than regular congressmen.

* * *

**Last March 14, I wrote here about the new campaign of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB)—the Oplan Isnabero—against choosy taxi drivers who refuse to take passengers to their destinations. In the same column, I exposed the activities of two LTFRB officials who mulct applicants for franchises, charging them P35,000 for each application.**

**LTFRB Chair Gen. Thompson C. Lantion sent a quick reply. The LTFRB, he said, "is very much concerned about these complaints (against cab drivers who refuse rides to passengers or hustle for a contract outside of the regular flag rate), hence the launching of 'Oplan Isnabero' in coordination with the Land Transportation Office and the Department of Transportation and Communications.**

**"However, to effectively enforce franchise regulations, the LTFRB has submitted a proposal to the DOTC for the creation of an LTFRB Law Enforcement Unit. It is now being studied by the department. We are expecting that this will be approved soon by the DOTC.**

**"On the second issue (the mulcting by two LTFRB officials), I have requested the DOTC Investigation, Security and Law Enforcement Service (ISLES) to conduct a full investigation and file the necessary cases if evidence warrants.**

**"For the purpose of transparency, I have also requested the LTFRB Chief Legal to take a leave of absence and relieve the consultant, pending investigation.**

**"Rest assured that we will get to the bottom of this. We will continue to implement reforms at the LTFRB to better serve the public."**

**I have invited General Lantion to the Kapihan sa Manila to explain other problems in the land transportation industry (particularly in Metro Manila) and how the LTFRB is trying to solve them. More on this in the next column.**

* * *

Many are asking what is the "something big" (I mentioned several columns ago) that would explode on April 23. Some think I have gotten wind of an impending coup.

No coup. Here is the truth: The "something big" will be another rollicking satirical show by Willie Nepomuceno for the 22nd anniversary of Kapihan sa Manila, the original and the "mother of all *kapihans*," whose slogan is now "imitated but never equaled."

How can they equal the regular Kapihan anniversary shows of Willie Nep and his friends? Next month, Willie, the "man of a thousand faces," will mimic the antics of senatorial candidates in a show titled "Willie Nep for Senators; Vote One, Win All." The dinner-show will be held at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel, the home of Kapihan sa Manila for the last 22 years. Date: April 23, 2007, starting at 7 p.m.

As many already know, the Kapihan shows seem to wield good and bad influences on candidates. Those who attend them are more likely to get elected, and those who don't are usually defeated. The smart ones, therefore, make it a point to attend the show. They not only enjoy the evening as they watch Willie and friends poke good-natured fun at them and their fellow candidates, their chances of poll victory are also boosted.

And as in past shows, there will be mock elections after the show. Experience has also shown us that those who win the Kapihan mock polls usually win in the real elections.

Seriously speaking, only a fool—candidate or not—will willingly choose to miss a Kapihan show. Candidates who miss it do so at their own peril.

Tickets are on sale at the Manila Hotel and other outlets.

## We're back to martial law

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

SATUR OCAMPO IS A CONGRESSMAN. UNTIL his party is defeated in the elections—and there is little sign it will be; in fact there is every sign it will leave its rivals biting the dust—he remains an elected public official. He deserves at the very most the respect that goes with his title. He deserves at the very least not to be manhandled the way he was last Monday.

The footage on TV make the blood boil. It would have been so even if he were not a member of Congress. The images come straight from martial law, when the authorities could do pretty much anything they pleased with suspects. Including move them about like chess pieces with the sole purpose of intimidating them or exposing them to harm. And on the basis of the most laughable charges, except that the victims are in no position to laugh. Nor indeed are the rest of us who have to grin and bear another atrocity by people drunk with power. This while the people guilty of the very thing they are accusing others of are free to laugh their heads off. No, more than that, this while the people guilty of far worse crimes are free to inflict this abuse on others.

Look at the people who connived to bring Ocampo to this pass—the two Gonzalezes, Esperon, Ermita and, of course, their boss in Malacañang. Any or all of them far more richly deserve to be haled to court for crimes ranging from the murder of people to the murder of democracy, whichever suffuses this land with a fouler stench. Any and all of them patently and richly deserve to be put behind bars and the key (to their cell) dropped to the bottom of the Pacific Ocean for crimes ranging from stealing the vote, corruption over and beyond the call of venality (how else could we have become the most corrupt country in Asia?) and the wholesale murder of journalists and political activists by command responsibility or active encouragement.

The Leyte judge had already told the police that Ocampo need not be delivered to Leyte. Manila's Finest, a modifier that now deserves only the noun "Goons," still insisted on giving him a tour of the Visayas without the usual "tourist-ic" amenities sung by Regine Velasquez at the top of her lungs. There's absolutely no excuse for it, except mental incapacity, though why they are being made to protect and serve in that state, only their patrons know.

I don't know why Congress isn't protesting it. Well, in fact, I do: Congress is infested with Jose de Venecia, the two Bicolanos who led the murder of the impeachment bids, the two Prosperos and sundry clowns. For sheer contrast, you need only look at the way Congress reacted to the deportation of Mark Jimenez to the United States for electoral crimes and Romeo Jalosjos' conviction for the un-Romeo-like molestation of minors, and to the arrest and continued detention of Ocampo.

In the first, they gathered around the criminals—I will not insult Solon by affixing his name on them—vowing undying love and fealty to their colleagues. Well, their undying loyalty died shortly later, but not after a fierce, and completely ridiculous, display of it, producing as they did the spectacle of lawmakers determined to thwart the law. Here with only a trumped-up charge against a colleague by the very people guilty of it, they will not lift a finger to help him. Well, he is not their peer, he is their better.

But, indeed, I don't know why the candidates, particularly from the opposition, aren't violently protesting it. It shows that elected officials can be removed anytime on one pretext or another—before elections, during elections, even after elections. The arrest and detention of Ocampo is all of a piece with the harassment and removal from office of elected public officials for crimes GMA and her mob are damnably guilty of.

I personally wouldn't be surprised if they prevent several opposition figures from taking their seats in the Senate or House on grounds of cheating. Yes, cheating. This government is no longer capable of being embarrassed. Despite being unelected and corrupt, it has gone on to oust elected officials on grounds of corruption. Despite its culpability for the runaway killings, it has filed a murder charge against Ocampo. Despite being headed by someone who connived with Garci to steal the vote, it can—and if this pattern holds, probably will—rob opposition candidates of victory, for cheating.

But far more than its implications for the elections, the epic injustice done to Ocampo casts a dark and heavy shadow on the future of this country. One is tempted to say that unless we watch out, we'll soon be back to martial law, or to a dictatorship with or without a declaration of martial law. But even that isn't true. We are back to martial law even as we speak, or to a dictatorship without the declaration of martial law. The hallmarks of democracy are the freedom to elect one's leaders, the freedom to speak and assemble, and, hell, the freedom to just exist.

We do not have the leaders we elected. We are holding elections under the auspices of iron-fisted rule which—as Ocampo's case shows—has no rules other than what the rulers decree. Our freedom to assemble has been scuttled and, with the antiterrorism law, our freedom to speak may be scuttled as well. Meanwhile the journalists and political activists are dying like flies. They're not just citizens too like you and me, they're the best citizens we have.

History repeats itself, as they say, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. It's true. Dictatorship has repeated itself in this country. The first time, courtesy of someone who would not give up power after having been elected twice; the second time, courtesy of someone who would not give up power after not having been elected at all.

# The kidnapping of Ocampo

ANALYSIS

*Amando Doronila*

WITHIN HOURS OF EACH OTHER LAST MONDAY, Filipinos witnessed on TV two surreal scenes depicting vividly the mauling of liberty by security forces in the Philippines.

At 3 a.m., footage showed before unbelieving Filipino eyes police pushing party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo into a van taking him to a private eight-seater Cessna special flight to face trial at a Leyte trial court for multiple murder charges.

Hours apart, in Baguio City, President Macapagal-Arroyo strutted in brisk goose steps, before TV cameras, on the parade grounds of the Philippine Military Academy where she addressed the PMA graduating class. She said her government had expanded democratic space. "The focus of the world is not only on the Philippine economic wonder but the way we are making democracy work while keeping the threat of terror at bay," she said.

The police hijack of Ocampo and the PMA speech presented starkly contrasting scenarios: the first paints the real and raw condition of abuse of power and authority by the security forces; the second, from the PMA, presents a fictional world of the Philippine situation, which President Arroyo wants Filipinos to see. The first is a sinister reality unfolding before TV cameras; the second, is a counterfeit and artificial rendition of that reality.

The people have eyes to see these events. The first scenario—the forceful arrest of Ocampo—captured by footage and reports of journalists, presented incontrovertible evidence of state terror inflicted on citizens. It showed us visibly how Ocampo was kidnapped by the security forces from their custody after he was arrested at the Supreme Court last Friday. He was flown toward Leyte and back to Manila after several hours in the plane, circling the skies; and only after Leyte Judge Ephrem Abando ordered the deferment of Ocampo's appearance at the court until the Supreme Court decides on Ocampo's petition challenging the legality of his arrest.

The attempt to transfer Ocampo to Leyte was arbitrary, irregular in many respects, an extraordinary procedure, rushed and done by cutting corners on due process. The kidnapping of Ocampo by security forces has few precedents in Philippine criminal case experience. It was not a "joy ride," courtesy of the private jet owned by a company reportedly headed by the brother of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno. (INQUIRER, 3/20/07) There were two police helicopters waiting to fly him to Leyte. They were not used.

The evidence on TV is not hearsay. It is direct and visual evidence bringing reality into the homes of Filipinos, rich and poor alike. It presented the smoking gun on political repression by the administration. The repression cannot be obscured by President Arroyo's efforts to shift the focus to what she calls the "positive points"—meaning, the economic achievements which, she claims, have made the Philippines the "economic wonder" that is catching the attention and admiration of investors "who are now seeing a permanent trajectory and political stability."

The trajectory that we see on TV is one leading to a regime of state-sponsored terror and this sends shivers up the spines of citizens. The TV footage made a big lie of the President's claim; it was a bare-faced lie and an insult to the intelligence of the people at the same time.

There are more than hints of madness in conjuring up this distorted vision of events in the Philippines. The TV footage of this whole arrest episode cruelly expose the sham of Philippine democracy—a democracy being ruthlessly undermined by the excessive application of force by the police in suppressing political dissidents.

The case of Ocampo has been running on the front pages of newspapers and on TV for several weeks. The more the police crack down on Ocampo and his leftist cohorts in the legal stream of electoral politics, the more they turn the public away from the President's futile attempts to refocus attention on her claims of economic gains. News on political repression is the central issue of the day.

Pulse Asia's March 2007 survey has shown that the party-list groups have electorally benefited from the military-police crackdown on the Left. Bayan Muna led the list of probable party-list winners with an overall vote preference of 11.9 percent, meaning, the group may be able to retain the three seats currently held by Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador.

The survey also found that other Left-wing party-list groups had the following poll preferences: Anakpawis, 8 percent; Akbayan, 7 percent; and Gabriela, 6.4 percent.

The police crackdown has made Ocampo a martyr, and may have ensured the election of party-list candidates of the Left for Congress, contravening the military-police objective of closing the democratic space to the parliamentary participation of the Left. It has stoked public anger at the administration which now faces a powerful backlash from voters—which could possibly translate into a rout of administration candidates in the Senate elections this coming May.

The police must be warned against pushing their anti-communist campaign close to the flashpoint of public revulsion against abuse of power and injustice. Ocampo is now under police custody and, in principle, under their protection.

The decision of the court to stay the transfer of Ocampo to Leyte not only aborted a kidnap attempt by the PNP but also returned him to the relative safety of detention in Manila, where vigilant media can keep an eye on him.

Any moment Ocampo is harmed, in whatever way or by whomsoever, the deluge will come. Blood will be in their hands. The police are sitting on a potential Benigno Aquino Jr. assassination case waiting to explode. That should never be allowed to happen.

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# An iconic photo

AT LARGE

*Rina Jimenez-David*

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FUNNY BUT NO ONE'S laughing. The photo of Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo being carried into a waiting van—while he sought to resist by keeping his body as stiff as he could—will live on beyond this current electoral season.

Indeed, the photo is destined for iconic status, a telling statement on the brute force of government as well as the arrogance of power.

And the story gets even more comical. Just minutes after they forced Ocampo into a van and a plane bound for Leyte, his red-faced escorts were facing the media again, after being forced back when a judge in Leyte made public that he had already ordered that Ocampo need not be brought to the province to face murder charges.

Though the police now insist that there was nothing irregular about this series of events, the foul-up smacks of disorganization at the very least and even of panic and paranoia on the part of government. Why was it so urgent that Ocampo be brought to Leyte that day? And why couldn't he have been brought via a commercial flight?

The timing of the filing of charges, as well as the sudden fast-forwarding of the court proceedings, is suspicious, especially since we're in the middle of election season and Bayan Muna has been found to be leading in the party-list race. The confusion at the airport yesterday could certainly be traced to the eagerness—or recklessness—with which authorities are trying to put Ocampo and other leftist leaders behind bars. But it's also just part of the continuing campaign against any dissident group, against voices of dissent, at a time when the leadership itself has betrayed its beginnings and seeks to silence everyone who raises difficult questions and disturbs the profitable status quo.

* * *

**RUDY Distrito, the retired professional basketball player known as "The Destroyer" because of his "physical" brand of play, was in TV news Monday night after his sentencing in a Las Vegas court. Distrito was meted out a sentence of four to 12 years after having been found guilty of voluntary manslaughter, for the death of Juan Amaya, a 24-year-old Mexican, in the course of a fight allegedly over a former girlfriend of Distrito's.**

**This is considered good news by Distrito's family and friends, in the United States and the Philippines. The prosecution had asked for the death penalty but the judge apparently listened to the pleas for leniency for Distrito.**

**Abe King, another former PBA player and friend of Distrito's who was in Las Vegas for the sentencing, told supporters that taking everything into consideration, the judge ordered Distrito to serve a minimum of 72 months and ordered him to pay the victim's family $10,000. And since Distrito has already served 24 months, "if he behaves well in prison, he can be paroled at the end of another year."**

**Rufino "Ruffy" Ignacio, a Fil-Am civic leader in Washington State and former manager of the PBA team Countryfair Hotdogs for which Distrito played, has been closely following the case and said Distrito's lawyer Dan Silverstein, a court-appointed public defense lawyer, received "many letter/e-mails of support from everywhere, including film clips of Rudy's glory days in the Philippines and showed them earlier to the sentencing judge."**

* * *

ASIDE FROM letters of support from friends and colleagues in the United States, Distrito also received letters from former colleagues in the Philippines, including former Sen. Robert Jaworski. A benefit game was also held in California to raise money for Distrito's legal expenses.

Here are excerpts from King's letter addressed to Silverstein:

"I have known Rudy for more than three decades as an athlete and friend .... We have had very competitive games against each other that the Filipino people truly enjoyed.

"During all the years of my acquaintance with Rudy, I have found him to be a true sportsman—intense but a gentleman in every sense of the word. He was honest in his dealings, amiable, and has true concern for other people. In off season, Rudy, on his own time, taught basketball among the youth in the slum areas in Manila and provinces. He played during fiestas, free of charge, just so the people can be entertained by the games. He was known in the entire country (for) his spirited and flawless brand of play. He is still well-loved and remembered to this day.

"...We were all shocked to hear of what happened and kept asking ourselves if it was the same Rudy Distrito that we knew. It was unbelievable, to say it frankly.

"To make a long story short, this is to offer my support to Rudy in this struggle for freedom, for life itself. Given another chance, the people will see the true Rudy Distrito—a good man, citizen, father, friend, and athlete, and not the criminal (he is) purported to be."

* * *

**FOR his part, Ignacio wrote that he and his compatriots in Washington "would like to vouch for Rudy's amiability as a person, his charming personality and loyalty to friends and fans....**

**"With his present predicament, we hope you can bring to the Judge our love and concern for Rudy Distrito. We hope the Judge will give Rudy his compassion for the crime committed by Rudy, not of his own accord but for circumstances beyond Rudy's control. Please convey to the Judge how we, and many thousands more Filipinos and Filipino-Americans, pray for Rudy Distrito's light sentence, or if at all possible, a suspended sentence.**

**"Should Rudy pass this painful trial, and possibly set free to society, we are even willing to adopt him in the Community in Olympia, Washington, to teach our kids how to play great basketball. That is how we all respect him. To us, he is not a criminal."**

**Ignacio says he hopes to visit with Distrito in late March or early April in Las Vegas, when he goes there for some business.**

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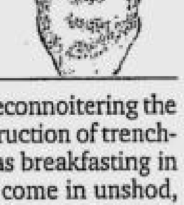
# Trivial details to some, insights to others



LOOKING BACK

*Ambeth R. Ocampo*

CARMEN GUERRERO NAKPIL, WHO ONCE wrote a history column like mine, once told me that her "secret weapon" was the 55-volume compilation of documents titled "The Philippine Islands," translated and edited by Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson. While I often turn to the Blair and Robertson opus for some obscure references, my "weapons of choice" are primary sources from the late 19th century: the 25 volumes of Rizal's collected writings, the two volumes of Mabini's collected writings, also Marcelo H. del Pilar's two volumes and, last but not least, the 5-volume "Philippine Insurrection Against the United States" compiled by J.R.M. Taylor. While these sources are read and mined for work, there are some works that can actually be read for pleasure. One of these, which has enriched this column with interesting detail, is the book "Price of Freedom" by Jose Alejandrino (translated from the original Spanish edition "La Senda del Sacrificio," first published in 1933) that provides personal insight not found in usual documentary evidence.

Alejandrino studied in Belgium and knew many men who ended up as textbook heroes—Graciano Lopez Jaena, Rizal, the Luna brothers Antonio and Juan, etc.; and I'm glad he not only wrote down his memories but also agreed to have these see print. I read Alejandrino every year just to refresh my memory and sometimes to spot details I might have ignored in earlier readings. Since I have been on food research lately, I noticed that Alejandrino often remembered events that occurred within a context of a meal. For example, he narrated watching Lopez Jaena eat [Spanish] sardines in oil with his fingers, and how the great orator who was described as careless and slovenly in dress, cleaned his fingers by wiping these on his already dirty suit. His meeting with Jose "Pepito" Leyba, days after the outbreak of the Filipino-American War, was associated with breakfast:

"On February 7, [1899], in compliance with [Antonio] Luna's orders, I went reconnoitering the places most suitable for the construction of trenches. I saw Pepito Leyba, while I was breakfasting in a small carinderia near Malinta, come in unshod, carrying his shoes at the end of his cane which he had over his shoulder. He told me that he had succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the American outposts but that upon reaching a certain distance, they saw him and started shooting at him. Crawling and concealing himself behind a ditch, he succeeded in escaping. Jokingly he showed me his shoes. One of them had its sole with a hole pierced by a bullet. Instinctively I looked at his feet, but laughing he told me that at the time he did not have his shoes on. He carried them at the end of his cane while he was crawling and they must have projected out of the ditch, one of them thereby receiving a hit.

"Thinking that he had not yet taken his breakfast, I invited him to share mine which consisted of a plate of red rice and a little *paksiw na bangus*. In spite of the fact that he had not had a morsel since the day before, he must have thought my breakfast not appetizing for he asked me if he could not get something better in another place. I answered him that he could go to the General Headquarters of Luna situated in the railway station of Polo and see if the breakfast there would be more to his liking, but I warned him not to have any illusions because I left the Headquarters without breakfast on account of the fact that I could not chew the tough and badly cooked meat that they had offered me there."

Another breakfast and another "Pepe" was the journalist Jose Villanueva who gave up writing and died in the Battle of Bagbag carrying Luna's rifle: "Rafael Palma related that while they were breakfasting one morning in the editorial office of [La Independencia] which was then in San Fernando, Pampanga, Luna showed up, asking who among those in the office would like to enlist in his division. Villanueva was the only one who volunteered saying, 'General, you can count on me.' Luna appointed him second lieutenant and his aide right then and there."

Then we have a quotation from Juan Luna who was disappointed with the musical fare he encountered in the Philippines upon his return from Paris:

"I was presented to a Filipino family of pure blood who had daughters with the soul of an artist and could play and sing with some taste. They played on the piano compositions of European masters, but having heard these pieces played in Europe by really eminent artists, they normally did not stir up new emotions in my soul. I had been absent from the country for many years, and on my return I wanted to live through and feel what was characteristically ours. I took for granted that those señoritas would know how to interpret with genuine color our simple and sentimental popular songs. So I asked one of them to have the kindness to play or sing the *kundiman*, the *kumintang*, or the *balitao*, but how great was my surprise when she answered me, in a slightly offended tone, that she did not know such music. I then told her to excuse me because I did not have the least intention to offend her, and that in Paris, during our homesickness, when we wanted to remember our faraway country, Filipino girls used to play and sing these national airs. Conclusion: In order to hear Filipino songs, one has to go to Paris."

Useless, trivial detail to some, insight to others.

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*Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu*

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# Caring more

PINOY KASI

*Michael L. Tan*

IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE THE UNITED STATES SENT troops into Iraq, but it could well have been 400 years ago--as far as Filipinos are concerned.

Intervention or invasion. That event now seems so distant, yet back in 2003, we too were caught in the frenzy around Iraq. I still remember the angry letters I got four years ago, mostly from Filipino-Americans, because of the columns I wrote opposing the invasion of Iraq. At that time, so many people believed George W. Bush and his claims that Saddam Hussein was part of al-Qaida. Saddam was the devil incarnate, supposedly stockpiling weapons of mass destruction (WMD) which he was ready to unleash on the world.

Courtesy of international cable channels, we saw, live, the "shock and awe" invasion and the collapse of Saddam. Who could forget the footage, replayed many times, showing a statue of Saddam being toppled in Firdos Square in Baghdad, to show how the Iraqis so welcomed American intervention? A year later, The Los Angeles Times wrote about how US Marines had instigated the toppling, even providing an American flag to wrap Saddam's face, until they realized the Iraqis weren't exactly impressed by that move. An Iraqi flag was brought in, and Iraqi children and youth were encouraged to cheer as the statue was finally brought down.

The Philippines jumped on the bandwagon, joining the United States in a Coalition of the Willing. Early on, the government organized a humanitarian and peacekeeping team, called the "Task Force on Philippine Participation in Post-War Rebuilding of Iraq," with 175 members and a budget of P141 million.

But there was more to this than humanitarianism. Government officials talked shamelessly, about how we could profit from Iraq, by sending overseas workers. A task force called "Philippine Public-Private Sector Partnership for Reconstruction and Development of Iraq" was formed to assist local companies to try to corner contracts from the US government for Iraq's "reconstruction." But the lucrative contracts didn't quite materialize. Filipinos were blacklisted after a group of workers, assigned to build the US prison for suspected terrorists in Cuba's Guantanamo Bay, tried to organize a union.

But never mind. When President Macapagal-Arroyo visited the United States in May 2003, she pledged loyalty to the US cause and came back boasting of more rewards, oops, more development assistance. Meanwhile, Filipinos were finding their way, on their own, into Iraq. In 2004, one Filipino truck driver was kidnapped by Islamist militants who threatened to execute him if we didn't withdraw from Iraq. We blinked, and I am told by American friends that the US government has never forgiven us for that.

### Comma in history

We need to be more conscious about the historical parallels between Iraq and the Philippines. We forget that we, too, were invaded in 1898, supposedly, to be taught democracy. We forget we were collateral damage in the Spanish-American War, just as the Iraqis got Bush's vented rage after 9/11 and al-Qaida.

Saddam was captured in December 2003, hastily tried and sent to the gallows on Dec. 30, 2006. No WMDs were found and even Bush has stopped referring to it. Instead, the new propaganda is that the US occupation is there to bring democracy to Iraq. In September last year, President Bush told CNN's Wolf Blitzer: "I like to tell people when the final history is written on Iraq, it will look like just a comma because there is—my point is, there is a strong will for democracy."

Yet Iraqi resentment against the Americans has increased. The latest BBC/ABC public opinion poll conducted between Feb. 25 and March 5 showed that 50 percent of Iraqis find the country's situation "somewhat worse" or "much worse." Asked how the presence of US forces affected security, 69 percent answered "worse."

Iraq has plunged into a bloody civil war since the invasion. One estimate from the Johns Hopkins University is that some 650,000 Iraqi civilians have died since the invasion. The death toll for American soldiers has climbed too: 500 in January 2004, 1,000 by September that same year. The new year saw the American death toll passing the 3,000 mark, more than the number killed in the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York.

The financial costs have been escalating as well. During US congressional hearings last January, Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England said that the cost of the "war on terror" (mainly Afghanistan and Iraq) was about $4.4 billion a month in 2003, but that this has climbed to $8.4 billion this year.

And is the world safer? Certainly not. Islamist fanaticism has been further fueled by the American occupation of Iraq, and the reports of American soldiers' violations of human rights, from the torture of prisoners in Abu Ghraib prison to murder and rape cases.

### Soldier named Caleb

Four years ago, I wrote, with some disgust, about how CNN and other cable channels were glamorizing war, with rosy reports of one US victory after another coming from journalists "embedded" with the invading forces.

These days the coverage has become more gory. One CNN special, "Combat Hospital," followed the maimed bodies of soldiers and civilians brought into American military hospitals. I tend to turn away, and turn to National Public Radio on the Internet radio, but there too, it's hard not to pause and listen to reports about America's war dead.

I can understand there's patriotism and idealism among these young soldiers, but the US mass media acknowledge how the casualties also tend to come from small, poor American towns, with military service providing some economic relief. One soldier had saved enough money for college and for a family, but he was killed before he could come home to his fiancée and two kids, including a baby son he had never met.

On New Year's Day, CNN featured the story off Pvt. First Class Caleb Lufkin, killed in May 2006 at the age of 24. I found his obituary on the Internet, where he was described as an "avid banjo player and enjoyed fishing, hunting and motorcycles." He had only finished high school, and gotten a volunteer firefighting certificate from the community college.

CNN featured a letter Lufkin's mother had written to say goodbye to her son:

"You were still smiling on your first day of kindergarten when I found it so hard to let go of your hand. I'll be okay, mom, you said over your shoulder at me as you trotted alone into the school with your new school backpack. It was almost more than I could bear let going of that little hand and releasing you into the world. And you said the same thing again when you went to Iraq. I'll be okay, mom, with your army pack on your back."

She ended the letter simply, "you are forever in my heart."

A few days after CNN featured the Lufkin story, Bush announced his intention for a new troop surge—more soldiers will be sent to Iraq.

We need to care more about Iraq—and America.

# Vote for environment in the coming May elections

WE BELIEVE THAT THE COMING ELECTIONS PROvide us an opportunity to emphasize the importance of environment and organic agriculture in our campaign for a sustainable development.

It is saddening to note that despite studies and experiences validating the positive impact of organic agriculture in increasing productivity and at the same time in protecting our environment, the government and the majority of our policymakers refuse to recognize the value of organic agriculture.

Mainstream agricultural production (i.e., hybrids, genetically modified organisms) remains anchored on "chemical farming." Although this kind of farming promises better yield, it poisons our land, aquifers and people. It makes farming unsustainable, a fact that shows in diminishing productivity and bio-diversity, high cost of production and greater danger to human health, all of which result in food insecurity, malnutrition and hunger for the majority of our small-scale food producers, especially women and children.

Thus, we call on the candidates for the national and local elections to include in their platforms not only economic and political issues but also environmental concerns.

We call on the electorate to critically examine their political choices, and to vote into office candidates who advocate and support the environment and organic agriculture agenda. We should ensure that we have safe and nutritious food, as well as a healthy and sustainable environment for the future generations.

To echo an oft-repeated exhortation, "Vote wisely!" If we may add, "Vote wisely for the environment, for us and for the future generations!"

**—LIZA M. VIDA,**
**advocacy officer,**
**Kaisampalad (Philippine NGO Council for Food Security and Fair Trade),**
**Unit 204 Eaglecourt Condominium,**
**Matalino Street, Barangay Central, Quezon City**

## Refuting GSIS sensitivity to pensioners

I AM REACTING TO VELLY N. LUCILO'S letter. (INQUIRER, 3/7/07)

Lucilo stated that "whenever GSIS formulates programs and procedures, (it has) in mind the circumstances of its member pensioners." I take exception to this. My father, Nestor Balagtas Gutierrez (ID No. 28022100101), 78 years old, has had to put up with this agency's inefficiency as well as insensitivity.

Almost blind due to a tumor in his brain, which is pressing against his optic nerve, and almost unable to walk due to arthritic knees, my father has been to GSIS Quezon City five times since January, when he filed his application for an eCard. Every time he goes there, he is given a different reason why his card is not yet ready and why, thus far, he has not received any of his monthly pensions this year.

In his last visit on March 5, he was given a new "excuse"—his card had to "pass the national office," that was why it was not ready yet. Three weeks before that, he was told that the card was not yet ready because there had been a computer glitch which affected all those who applied in January. Those who applied in February, fortunately for them, have already received their eCard and thus, have been able to collect their pension.

Tough luck for my father, he is one of those old, weak and helpless pensioners who cannot do anything but wait till the GSIS issues him his card. Good thing for my father, my siblings and I are able to help him financially while he is waiting for his pension to be made available. Good thing also for my father, he still has us his kids and his grandchildren to help him make those physically strenuous trips to the GSIS office.

I pity all the pensioners who do not have these resources, those who I saw had to literally crawl their way to the GSIS office only to be told that their eCard is not ready yet and that they have to come back some other time.

Calling the GSIS office is definitely not an acceptable alternative. Hoping to save my father the numerous, strenuous trips to the GSIS, I tried to call the GSIS office (Tel. Nos. 927-9472 and 920-2203) only to discover that one can spend the entire day dialing these numbers: the phones are either left unanswered or are eternally busy.

So, while I appreciate Lucilo's loyalty to the government agency she works for, I am not willing to suffer the so-called "birth pains" of this new government program. The GSIS was put there mainly to help provide for the welfare of its members, especially the pensioners who have, in most cases, dedicated their entire working lives to the government.

**—CHERRY V. GUTIERREZ,**
**c/o Campaigns & Grey,**
**8/F BA Lepanto Bldg.,**
**Paseo de Roxas Avenue, Makati City**

## Can people trust Pacman to honor promises?

BEWARE OF HYPOCRISY. MANY ELECTORAL candidates indulge in blatant hypocrisy. Manny Pacquiao's statement that he is "fed up with politicians who keep making promises," appears to be the latest example.

Is this the same Pacquiao who signed a contract with Oscar de la Hoya for $500,000 ($250,000 in cash in a suitcase) and then reneged on it in exchange for $1 million from Bob Arum?

Is this the same Pacquiao whom trainer, Freddie Roach, described as someone just wanting cash and more cash?

Pacquiao was lured into the original contract by accepting a large sum of money; then he was lured out of it for an even larger sum of money. Money appears to be the main motive for his lack of ethics and apparent disregard for honor and trustworthiness.

Can such a person be trusted to honor any agreement? What value can people put on his promises? Would he keep his promises if he gets into Congress?

**—COLIN HUNT, colinhunt@pacific.net.ph**

## The bigger problem is lack of education

WITH DUE RESPECT TO FORMER CHIEF Justice Artemio Panganiban, I beg to disagree with his opinion that our problem is the lack of visionary leaders who—by their own example—obey our laws, respect our institutions and place the interest of the public above others.

I believe that there is a bigger problem: the lack of education. One consequence of this problem is an electorate that cannot vote wisely for candidates qualified to hold the office they're running for.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. If Dr. Martin Bautista, Zosimo Paredes and Adrian Sison, Ang Kapatiran's senatorial candidates, will win in the coming elections, that will be proof enough that we have wise and courageous voters capable of choosing competent candidates.

However, we Filipinos should not stop there; we should unite to glorify and honor God by working for a more prosperous and progressive Philippines. God bless our nation.

**—ISIDORO A. PANLASIGUI JR.**
**6 Big Horseshoe Drive, QC**

## AFP's contradictions

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES is once again caught in a web of horrifying contradictions as it justifies the deployment of heavily armed soldiers in urban communities, particularly in Metro Manila. National Capitol Region military chief Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said this is part of the AFP's objective of promoting lasting and community-based peace and development.

The AFP has seemingly forgotten that the presence of soldiers in full battle gear does not give the impression that they are out to promote peace and development. It does not reverse the AFP's image as an institution behind extrajudicial killings, election fraud or graft and corruption; or with no qualms about abusing power and violating civil and political rights. And in the mind of the residents, it raises the question: Are we under a state of martial law?

Without the blessing of the President, the AFP will not have this kind of brazenness. If this government and the AFP are sincere, the practical and most fundamental thing they can do is to deliver basic social services, which are indispensable and essential to peace and development.

In urban poor communities and elsewhere, the people want food, education, health services, housing, clean and potable water, toilets, jobs and just wages. These are not luxuries. These are basic needs. If GMA and the AFP want peace, they should deliver these needs. Taxes squeezed from the people's blood and sweat should not be immorally spent to scare communities.

Dolorfino said that the AFP is just being "proactive" in solving problems, to prevent Philippine society from collapsing like a "house eaten by termites from the inside." If so, then he should rush to Malacañang and clean it up from the worst termite—Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who cheapened the electoral system by cheating her way to "victory" to the presidency. The Hello Garci scandal is far from closed.

Yes, we have unresolved problems from the past. But contrary to the AFP's claim, these problems were caused not by the poor but by the ruling elite, who are least concerned about poverty, landlessness, unequal distribution of resources and inequitable delivery of social services. The problem is the military which believes might is right.

**—NORMA P. DOLLAGA,**
**general secretary,**
**Kapatirang Simbahan Para Sa Bayan (Kasimbayan), 3/F NCCP, 879 Edsa, QC**

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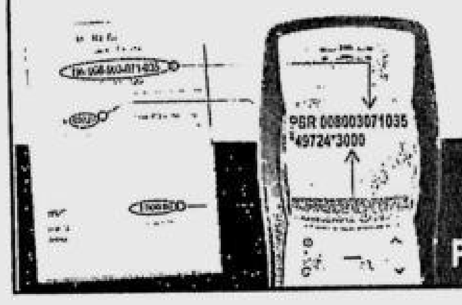

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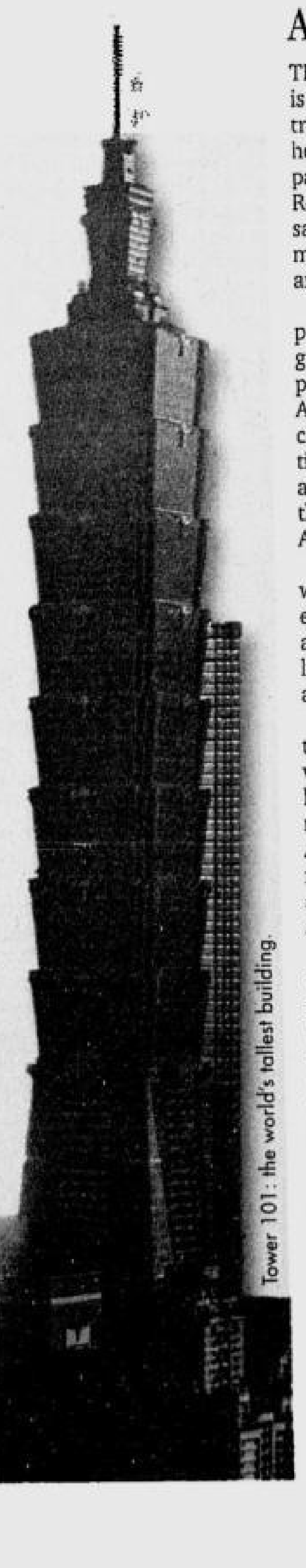

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# Guimaras fishermen to be taught seaweed farming

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THEY WILL NO LONGER LIVE by fish alone, but by seaweed and coco textiles.

Idled by the oil spill that destroyed fish sanctuaries and mangroves last year, the fishermen of Guimaras Island will be taught seaweed farming and coco-based geotextile production.

The alternative livelihood is a project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in partnership with Petron Foundation Inc.

It was a Petron-chartered oil tanker that sank in the waters off Guimaras Island in August 2006 spilling more than a million liters of its contents into the sea.

The oil spill, the worst in the country so far, reached the white sand shores and beaches of Guimaras—where fishing is the main source of income—and ruined mangroves and seaweed plantations.

Thousands of fisherfolk in towns flanked by the contaminated waters lost their livelihood.

Now, seven months after the accident that reduced the usually "self-sufficient" towns to poverty, several of the fishermen have gone back to the waters, making do with a meager catch each day, said Ruel Lucantales, social welfare assistant secretary for Visayas and Mindanao cluster field offices. .

"They catch a little and earn a little. With the new livelihood, they have something else to boost their income," Lucantales told the INQUIRER.

The DSWD tapped the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) to train Guimaras residents how to plant, harvest, dry and store seaweeds (for seaweed farming), as well as weave coco filaments into fabric (geotextile production).

They will also be taught basic management skills and bookkeeping.

Lucantales said seaweeds and geotextiles have export appeal.

Seaweeds produce carageenan, a main component in confections, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products. Geotextiles, the byproduct of copra, are used as carpets to hold soil together, preventing erosion.

"Anyone of labor age can participate in these projects," Lucantales said. "They can be out-of-school youths, able-bodied and the elderly."

The livelihood program will be bankrolled by a P3-million grant from the Petron Foundation.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral recently signed the memorandum of agreement with Nicasio Alcantara and Khalid Al-Faddagh, chair and president of Petron Foundation Inc., respectively.

Of the total budget, about P2 million would be distributed to 15 groups with 20 to 25 members each, pooled together by the DSWD to form community-based credit organizations under its Self-Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran Program.

At the height of the oil spill, the DSWD allocated P2 million for cash-for-work projects and P2.5 million for relief goods. At least 3,000 families who were directly affected by the catastrophe were paid P200 a day in the cleanup of shorelines and mangroves.

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# SC sacks CA justice for gross ignorance ...

From page A1

July 24, 2001, a resolution that temporarily stopped the implementation of the decision in the PNB case. On Oct. 30, 2001, the justice ordered the maintenance of the status quo, which effectively extended the TRO.

But the high court said TROs from the appellate court should only last 60 days.

"Such failure to follow basic legal commands embodied in the law and the rules constitutes gross ignorance of the law, from which no one is excused, and surely not a judge," the court said.

## Badges of bad faith

Citing a previous ruling, the court said that it had "declared that judges owe it to the public to be knowledgeable, hence they are expected to have more than just a modicum of acquaintance with the statutes and procedural rules."

The court also said Asuncion had shown undue interest in the PNB case because he did not hand it over to his replacement when he was transferred to Cebu in July 2004 and resumed handling the case on his return to his Manila station.

In his defense, Asuncion said the two resolutions cited in the PNB case were the collegial acts of the appellate court's first division which is composed of three justices.

ASUNCION

But the high court said it had to consider the totality of the charges against Asuncion and the circumstances regarding the cases, which raised several questions including why the PNB case remained with Asuncion.

"To the court, these are badges of bad faith and manifest undue interest attributable only to the respondent, and not to the other two justices of the CA Division. Accordingly, only the respondent must be made to suffer the consequences," it said.

The high court also noted that in the PNB case, Asuncion took five years to resolve PNB's June 13, 2001, motion for reconsideration despite Archinas' four motions seeking the immediate resolution of the matter. It added that the situation "truly smacks of gross inefficiency and serious dereliction of duty."

## Suspicion of malice

"Worse, it invites suspicion of malice, and casts doubt on the justice's fairness and integrity," the court said.

Asuncion was also found to have, as of Sept. 30, 2006, 71 motions for reconsiderations unresolved within the prescribed 90-day period, according to the high court. He also had 82 cases submitted for decision that were still undecided even after the 12-month prescribed period had lapsed.

The high tribunal also said Asuncion misrepresented the number of cases before him.

"This intolerable inaction is aggravated by misrepresentation. Upon his assignment to the CA Cebu Station, respondent listed only nine cases allegedly unresolved by and pending with him. The findings of the investigator belie this assertion," the high court said.

Defending himself, Asuncion denied that he had deliberately ignored the cases and attributed the delay to the reorganization of the appellate court, his assignment to Cebu and his subsequent transfer to Manila, which caused "some confusion" in the assignment of cases and "a lapse in the monitoring system."

He also cited his heavy caseload.

But the high tribunal did not find the justice's reasoning sufficient. It said "other CA justices are likewise subjected to such a heavy caseload, and yet, have not incurred such inexcusable delay."

## Decision-making primary duty

The tribunal also said Asuncion should remember that decision-making is his primary duty as a member of the judiciary.

Sought for comment, Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Ruben Reyes said he did not object to the Supreme Court's bid to uphold the integrity of the judiciary.

"We fully support the reform program of the Chief Justice," Reyes said.

He also said he had ordered the clerk of court to reorganize the division that Asuncion would vacate.

Asuncion chairs the 11th division of the appellate court. He joined the said court in May 1999. His father, Justice Elias Asuncion, also served at the appellate court and was a survivor of the Bataan death march.

Asuncion was the second appellate justice to be sacked. In 2001, Justice Demetrio Demetria was fired for interceding in the drug case of Yu Yuk Lai at the justice department.

# Pagasa folk losing hope ...

From page A1

pore-based company "pirated" two weather specialists to work in Dubai.

"There's a great possibility that the same company will come back to recruit more specialists, but not in the near future. When that happens, we can't stop these forecasters from joining that company," Pagasa weather bureau branch chief Nathaniel Cruz told the INQUIRER.

"We can't prevent a brain drain," he said.

Cruz, who himself worked as a weather forecaster in Saudi Arabia in 1989 and was paid $1,000 a month, believed that the recruiting company had offered the two weather specialists salaries double, or even triple, what they were getting.

"The government can't equal what [the company is] offering," he said.

## Greener pastures

According to Pagasa information officials, a weather specialist I receives an annual pay of P159,600; a weather specialist II, P179, 328; a senior weather specialist, P201,204; and a supervising weather specialist, P222,120.

The two who flew the coop had been monitoring the weather for Pagasa for the past 10 to 15 years, and were weather specialists II.

"If you're doing good at work, and you have a family here, you won't think of leaving. But I guess the offer of higher pay will make you change your mind," Cruz said.

Pagasa information officer Venus Valdemoro agreed: "I think those who left Pagasa merely wanted to seek greener pastures."

The bureau has no record of any forecaster leaving to work abroad in 2006. But toward the end of 2005, a forecaster was recruited by the same Singaporean company, and many others before then.

Cruz said the vacancies left by the two specialists had been filled up by meteorologists from Pagasa's other branches.

But he conceded that the two were "a big loss" because of their long experience in weather forecasting.

## 3 shifts daily

"Meteorologists who work at the forecasting section every day have [a bigger] edge than those who don't because they know the weather systems affecting the country at any time of the year," he said.

At present, 13 meteorologists work in three shifts daily to monitor the weather around the clock at the forecasting section.

The ideal number is 16. But when tropical cyclones hit, more forecasters are needed to prepare bulletins and advisories, Cruz said.

"That's the ideal number, but there are constraints [in employing some more], like budget," he said.

Pagasa also cannot hire replacements for some forecasters who have retired in view of the "rationalization program" of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

To help stop the drain, Cruz proposed that the DOST provide monetary incentives for forecasters who work at night beyond their work schedule.

"We need other incentives for those working on night shifts, like night differential, because they get the same pay as those meteorologists who work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have this kind of incentives, the forecasters will think twice of leaving, especially if they have a family here," Cruz said, adding:

"Maybe this is the positive thing about this. It highlights the need for the government to provide incentives for forecasters."

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# Smoking ages not just your face but your skin

From page A1

logy, shows that smoking affects the skin all over the body—even skin protected from the sun.

"We examined nonfacial skin that was protected from the sun, and found that the total number of packs of cigarettes smoked per day and the total years a person has smoked were linked to the amount of skin damage a person experienced," Dr. Yolanda Helfrich of the University of Michigan, who led the study, said in a statement.

"In participants older than 65 years, smokers had significantly more fine wrinkling than nonsmokers. Similar findings were seen in participants aged 45 to 65 years," Helfrich's team added in their report.

The researchers tested 82 people, smokers and nonsmokers, taking pictures of the inner right arms. They ranged in age from 22 to 91 and half were smokers.

Independent judges decided how wrinkled each person's skin was.

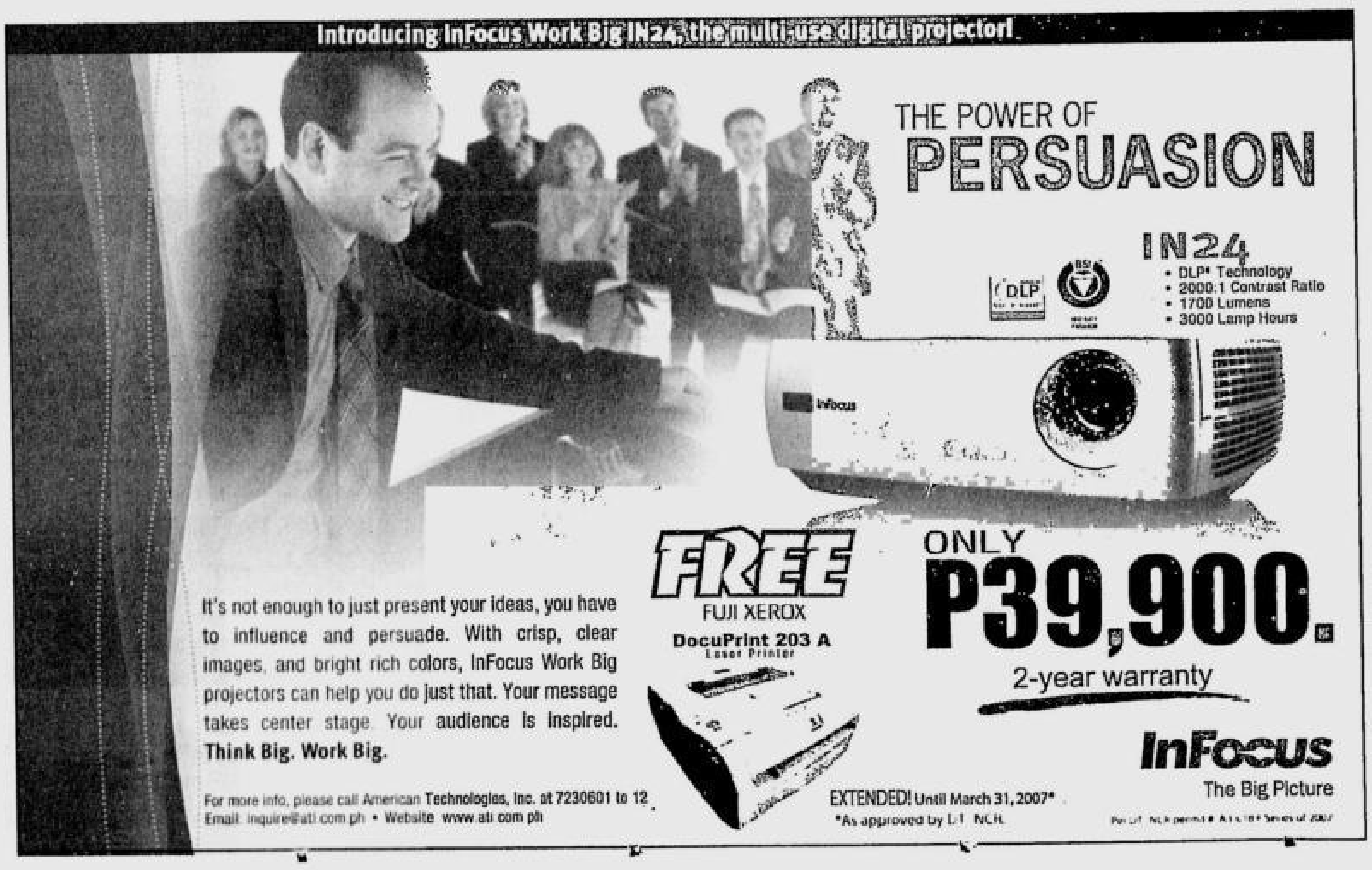
When skin is exposed to sunlight, notably the face, it becomes coarse, wrinkled and discolored with a pale yellow tint, Helfrich's team wrote.

Several previous studies have found that cigarette smoking contributes to premature skin aging as measured by facial wrinkles, the study said, but little has been done to measure the aging of skin not exposed to light.

The report did not discuss the mechanism involved but previous research has found that cigarette smoke, among other things, causes blood vessels beneath the skin to constrict, reducing blood supply to the skin.

Smoking can also damage the connective tissue that supports both the skin and the internal organs.

*Reuters*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# Fears raised over motive of barangay assemblies

**By Joey A. Gabieta**
*Inquirer Visayas*

TACLOBAN CITY—A CHURCH-based organization in Eastern Visayas questioned the reason for the holding of synchronized barangay assemblies next week.

Johann Arpon, regional coordinator of the Promotion for Church People's Response, said her group recognized the importance of a barangay assembly in ventilating issues concerning barangays but he noted that the timing for the assembly was dubious.

"The timing, and more so, the motive is suspicious if taken into the context of what is happening today. The standing among voters preference for the administration-backed Team Unity is not very encouraging," Arpon said.

He said the March 31 synchronized barangay assemblies could be used as venue against progressive party-list groups, which are leading in different surveys.

But Myles Joseph Colasito, information officer of the DILG regional office, dismissed Arpon's claim.

Colasito said the holding of the nationwide and synchronized barangay assemblies was mandated under the Local Government Code of 1991.

During the assembly, barangay leaders would report to their constituents on the status of barangay funds and other issues, Colasito said.

However, he admitted that based on Memorandum Circular 2001-23 issued by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, the other agenda for the synchronized assemblies was to conduct "information dissemination on the forthcoming national, local elections."

In his order, Puno directed all governors, city and municipal mayors "to extend necessary assistance to the barangays to ensure the successful conduct of the event."

In March last year, the Department of the Interior and Local Government also directed all barangays in the country to hold their assemblies. One of the issues taken up was Charter change.

# Plunder case filed vs DPWH, Mandaue execs over lampposts

**By Jolene Bulambot and Jhunnex Napallacan**
*Inquirer Visayas*

CEBU CITY—A COMPLAINT FOR PLUNDER WAS filed against Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano and other subordinate officials and the Department of Public Works and Highways regional office for the illegal release of funds to purchase allegedly overpriced lampposts and streetlights.

A local contractor, Crisologo Saavedra, filed the amended complaint for plunder on Monday after the DPWH regional office released P50 million to Fabmik Construction and Equipment Co. Inc., one of the two contractors of the decorative lamppost project.

Among those named were DPWH regional director Robert Lala, assistant regional director Marlina Alvizo, maintenance head Pureza Fernandez, and members of the regional DPWH bids and awards committee.

The other respondents included Ouano and other city officials, Land Bank of the Philippines branch manager Fidel Uy, Fabmik Construction president Isabelo Braza, the Fabmik Construction board of directors, Zenaida Balmaceda of Gampik Construction and Development Inc., and all members of the Gampik board of directors.

Saavedra's complaint did not include Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, former public works secretary, who approved the setting up of 30 lampposts in a private beach resort in Lapu-Lapu City.

Saavedra explained that he did not have enough proof to implicate Ebdane although the secretary approved the installation of the lampposts on private property.

The complainant's motive, however, was questioned by a firm that installed a traffic surveillance system in Metro Cebu for the Asean summit in January.

In a statement, Triton Communications Corp. said the firm represented by Saavedra, Cebesos Development Corp. and Pelican Bay Group Inc. failed to install P90 million worth of traffic surveillance equipment in time for the summit despite winning the bid.

It quoted Paolo Alabado, sales manager and spokesperson of Triton, as saying that the failure of Cebesos to install the traffic equipment proved it was incapable to mount such a system and could be a reason Saavedra was raising the lamppost issue.

Saavedra alleged that the lampposts and the streetlights were overpriced but he did not cite specific personalities—only government officials—as respondents.

He attached in his complaint a letter to Mayor Tomas Osmeña proposing to supply lampposts to Cebu City at P31,000 each, including expenses for installation work.

Gampik general manager Dante Valencia said the company should not be accused of selling overpriced lampposts.

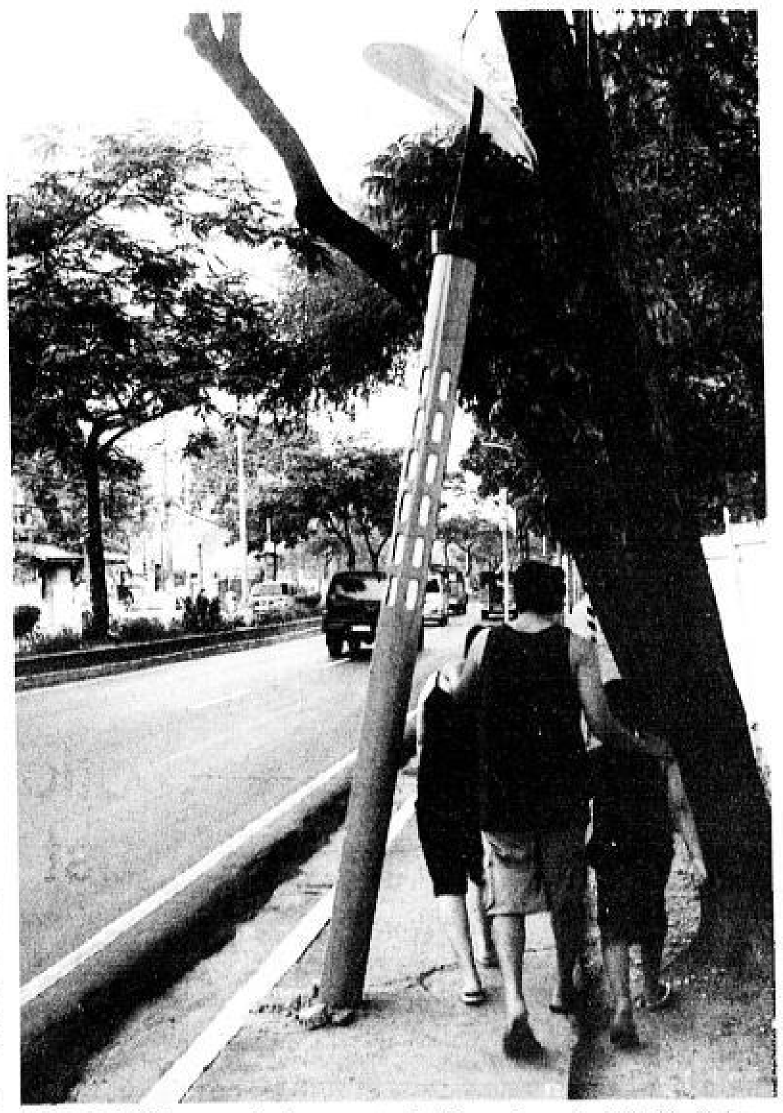
He said Gampik supplied lampposts to Cebu City that cost P83,000 to P85,000 each and to Lapu-Lapu City at P95,000 each.

While the lampposts in Lapu-Lapu were similar to those in Cebu City, he said, these cost higher because they had to do overtime work to finish the installation on time.

But Valencia admitted that the actual cost of the lamppost was only P24,000 each. The P85,000 to P95,000 cost per lamppost include total cost of installation, such as wiring, other electrical gadgets, labor and civil works.

Valencia said the company received payment for only 85 percent of the first contract amounting to P55 million. The government owes the company about P155 million for the second contract, which has not been paid due to a cease-and-desist order from the Ombudsman.

Valencia said Gampik would ask for a temporary restraining order before the Court of Appeals to get the payment due them.



**ONE OF THE** expensive lampposts that have been installed in Cebu, on Juan Luna Street, for the Asean summit, leans toward a tree, making it difficult for pedestrians to use the sidewalk. CDN PHOTO

# Defensor unfazed by protests in Boracay

**By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.**
*Inquirer Visayas*

ILOILO CITY—ADMINISTRATION SENAtorial candidate Michael Defensor is unfazed by the campaign of a group of resort owners in Boracay urging people not to vote for him.

"I will still campaign in Boracay if there is an opportunity," Defensor said after a press conference of Team Unity candidates held here on Sunday.

Defensor said not all resort owners support the campaign of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI).

The BFI, a group of owners of resorts, restaurants and other businesses on the island-resort, earlier said they would campaign against Defensor.

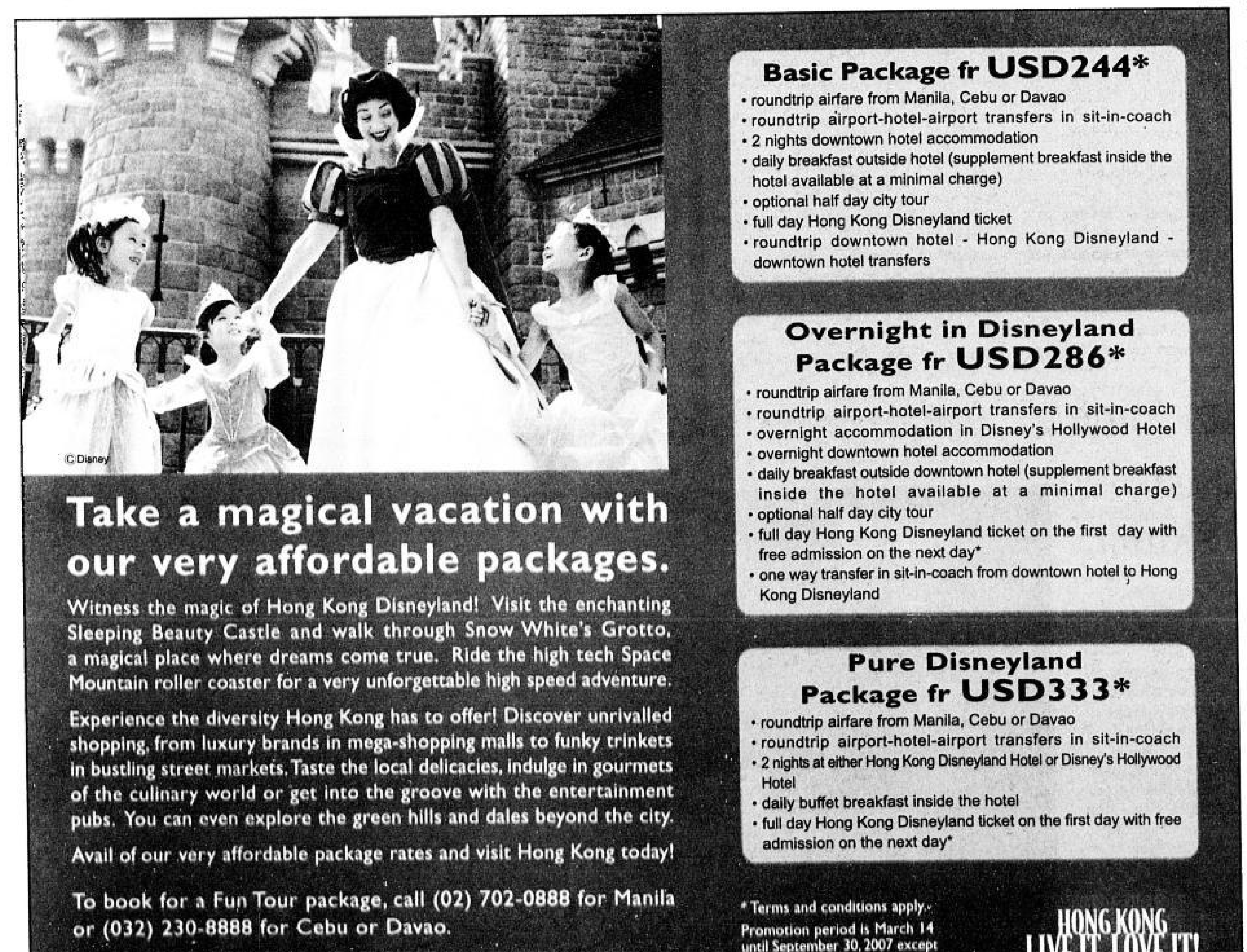
The BFI is blaming Defensor for the proclamation issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo last year, which declared Boracay alienable and disposable.

The proclamation, drafted when Defensor was environment secretary, classifies 628.96 hectares, or 60.94 percent, of the 1,032-hectare island as alienable and disposable.

The DENR will sell through public bidding the areas classified as alienable and disposal, which are used for commercial purposes and sell directly to the occupant the areas classified for residential use but not exceeding 1,000 square meters.

Defensor said he should not be blamed for the proclamation.

He said land claimants have been clamoring for years to have their properties titled and it was only during his stint at the DENR that this was made possible.



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ELECTION '07

## Banana magnate to run for gov

DAVAO CITY—Davao del Norte Rep. Antonio Floirendo Jr. (2nd District) has signified interest in running for governor of his province.

Floirendo's family owns the Anflocor group of companies, with interests mostly on banana production.

Carlos Munda, a public relations man of the Floirendos, confirmed to the INQUIRER that the representative would be seeking the governorship. His cousin, Vice Gov. Anthony del Rosario, earlier announced that he intended to run for governor but had to give way to Floirendo, saying it was "family decision."

"His personal plans are subordinate to the family decision," Munda said, explaining the young Del Rosario's reason behind the turnaround.

Munda said Floirendo made sure that he was able to get the family's support and had consulted local leaders before announcing his decision.

Del Rosario reportedly thanked Floirendo, saying his cousin was responsible in convincing him to join politics. He will not be running for any elective position but will return to managing the family-owned business.

*Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao*

## BI chief pushed for mayor

DAGUPAN CITY—A group of businessmen and professionals is pushing the bid of Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. to reclaim his old seat as city mayor.

The group, led by MacArthur Samson, president of the University of Luzon, also announced in front of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. during a gathering on Sunday that businesswoman and former Councilor Belen Fernandez would be the commissioner's running mate.

Belen Fernandez owns the CSI Group of Companies that operates malls in Pangasinan, La Union, Baguio City and Candon City.

"With your blessing, these are the candidates for Dagupan City," Samson said, addressing De Venecia.

Reached for comment, Fernandez declined to be interviewed, saying he has not yet resigned from the Bureau of Immigration. *Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

## SC rules for Rosal

LEGAZPI CITY—The Supreme Court, voting 15-0, has declared null and void the Commission on Elections ruling declaring a former city councilor, Michael Imperial, winner over Mayor Noel Rosal in the May 2004 elections.

The court, in its decision, stated that the Comelec's Second Division adopted a "manifestly unreasonable procedure" in the review of the election protest filed by Imperial on May 24, 2004, pointing out its failure to consider the condition of the ballots before they were recounted.

While Imperial claimed that he was cheated during the election, Rosal said he was a victim of post-election fraud when election returns were tampered with after the counting of votes.

Rosal intended to present 110 public schoolteachers who had served as Board of Election Inspectors (BEI), as witnesses.

The teachers claimed that the signatures that appeared in the returns were not theirs.

*Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

# NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Berkley International Plans, Inc., Berkley International Life Insurance Company, Inc. and Family First, Inc. would like to inform all policy holders and the general public that the entire shareholdings of Berkley International Philippines, Inc. were acquired on the 19th March 2007 by Danvil Holdings, Inc.

The principal shareholder of Danvil Holdings, Inc. is Mr. Daniel L. Villanueva, Berkley International Philippines' former Executive Vice President-Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Villanueva is now the President of the new organization. The company names, trademarks and logos will be changed within the next forty-five (45) days.

Berkley International Philippines has, to date, 60,000 active policies and trust fund assets of P3.7 billion, with policy holder liability of P3.2 billion with the assigned trustee banks pursuant to Securities and Exchange Commission regulations. It operates one of the soundest reserved pre-need companies in the Philippines.

We shall continue to comply in good faith with all obligations pursuant to the terms of all plans and policies issued by us.

**Berkley International Plans, Inc.**
**Table of Funds with Trustee Banks**
**As of December 31, 2006**

| | Deutsche | ING | Union Bank | EBC | MBTC | Total Education | Pension | Total 2006 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Assets** | | | | | | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 1,169,236.35 | 267,264,984.73 | 21,905,387.93 | 323,139.18 | 53,144.32 | 290,715,893 | 1,201,346 | 291,917,239 |
| Financial assets at FVPL debt securities | 2,008,762,306.64 | 824,764,961.85 | 90,040,199.76 | 275,619,477.74 | 245,680,666.21 | 3,444,867,612 | 52,679,838 | 3,497,547,450 |
| Accrued interest receivable | 43,149,474.33 | 17,050,663.03 | 1,077,277.78 | 6,259,711.95 | 5,119,297.53 | 72,656,425 | 1,245,464 | 73,901,889 |
| Other assets | 481,805.02 | | | | | 481,805 | 5,233 | 487,038 |
| | 2,053,562,822.34 | 1,109,080,609.61 | 113,022,865.47 | 282,202,328.87 | 250,853,108.06 | 3,808,721,734.35 | 55,131,882 | 3,863,853,617 |
| **Liabilities** | | | | | | | | |
| Trustee fees payable | (749,028.23) | (368,608.51) | (77,149.80) | (270,152.06) | (247,768.83) | (1,712,707) | (20,239) | (1,732,947) |
| Deferred tax on premium | (21,228,157.05) | | | | | (21,228,157) | (216,621) | (21,444,778) |
| | **2,031,585,637** | **1,108,712,001** | **112,945,716** | **281,932,177** | **250,605,339** | **3,785,780,870** | **54,895,022** | **3,840,675,892** |
| **Equity** | | | | | | | | |
| Fund balance, beginning of year | 1,567,341,654.91 | 1,140,317,285.19 | - | 223,912,932.39 | 205,403,233.58 | 3,136,975,106 | 46,136,091 | 3,183,111,197 |
| Additional deposits | 126,845,004.99 | (268,560,276.17) | 82,000,000.00 | (17,440,134.20) | 27,794,758.32 | (49,360,647) | 13,212 | (49,347,435) |
| | 1,694,186,659.90 | 871,757,009.02 | 82,000,000.00 | 206,472,798.19 | 233,197,992 | 3,087,614,459 | 46,149,303 | 3,133,763,762 |
| Net income | 337,398,977.16 | 236,954,992.08 | 30,945,715.67 | 75,459,378.62 | 17,407,347.33 | 698,166,411 | 8,745,719 | 706,912,130 |
| Fund balance, end of year | **2,031,585,637** | **1,108,712,001** | **112,945,716** | **281,932,177** | **250,605,339** | **3,785,780,870** | **54,895,022** | **3,840,675,892** |

*As per trustee banks financials*

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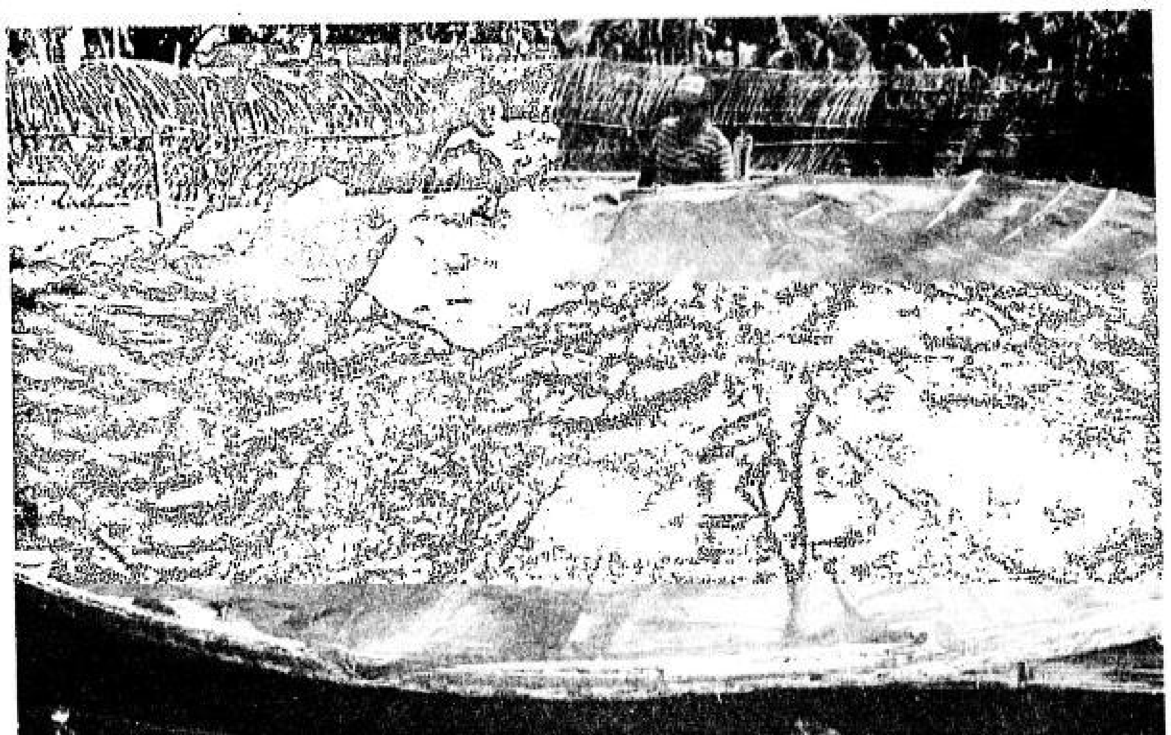


**THIS** huge *bilao* (bamboo-made pan) with a diameter of five meters contains the biggest *dudol* that Paoay town in Ilocos Norte ever made during the town's Guling-guling Festival.

**CHILDREN** try out squeezing juice from a sugarcane using the *dadapilan* or sugarcane mill. The mill is usually pulled by a carabao.

PHOTOS BY CRISTINA ARZADON

# Merrymaking before season of sacrifice

**By Cristina Arzadon**
*Paoay, Ilocos Norte*

CATHOLICS AMONG ILOCANOS in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, ended the day of earthly pleasures on the eve of Ash Wednesday with a mardi gras before marking the season of sacrifice.

The annual celebration, which has become known in Ilocos Norte as the Guling-guling Festival, signals to Catholics that merrymaking is over and that it is the beginning of the 40-day Lenten season marked by fasting and penitence.

"Guling-guling" means to smear the sign of the cross on the forehead using the ashes of burnt leaves. Instead of lining up before a priest, however, festival participants receive the imprint made from wet, white rice flour called the "*bellaay*" from the town mayor.

Traditionally held the day before Ash Wednesday, the celebration gathered the old and the young on the streets for a day of dining, wining and street dancing.

Garbed in their native *inabel* (handwoven) dresses, elderly men and women danced on the streets to the rhythm of folk songs.

The historical town of Paoay, also the seat of the world-renowned Paoay Church, is known for its deep-rooted traditions, which its residents continue to rediscover to promote the values of the past.

Mayor Bonifacio Clemente said the festival transcends the carnival mood as indicated by the presence of religious and cultural icons that were displayed in each household to observe the event.

**PARTICIPANTS** dance their way along the town's streets leading to the Paoay Church.

At least seven houses dressed up their front yards to capture the significance of the event. Homeowners brought out various keepsakes—handwoven clothes, blankets, native jars and old wares—while other houses displayed mini-altars with various religious images.

"We continue to revisit our cultural identity to remind us who we are and where we came from so that we can be guided by these values as we face the future," Clemente said.

The Guling-guling is no ordinary day for residents either. They used a vacant lot to set up the production of *dudol* (rice cake), which was later distributed to street dancers.

Instead of designating several households to prepare the *dudol*, town officials concentrated on the production of the rice cake to one area and created a huge *bilao* (bamboo-made pan with a diameter of five meters) to carry the biggest *dudol* that the town has ever made.

Ann Mangligot and two other *dudol* makers used an *anawang* to cook the rice cake. *Anawang* is an improvised oven created by digging three holes on the ground.

The oven has three chambers—one for firewood, the middle for the large cooking pan (locally known as the *siliasi*), and the last chamber for the vent.

Mangligot, who earns a living by selling *dudol* to schoolchildren, said she used half a cavan of rice, 60 coconuts and 10 cans of sugarcane juice, which were extracted from more than 500 pieces of sugarcane.

Most *dudol* makers still use a carabao-drawn sugarcane mill locally known as the *dadapilan* to extract juice from sugarcane.

The giant *dudol*, which was placed on a trailer, was later paraded in the streets before it was distributed to festival participants.

To complete the merrymaking, residents were given samples of the *basi* (fermented wine made of sugarcane) to down the rice cake.

# Ibaloi farm combines eco-tourism, organic farming

**By Delmar Cariño**
*Tublay, Benguet*

A 20-HECTARE PIECE OF property that formed part of a landmark Supreme Court decision on ancestral lands is fast emerging as the region's biggest organic farming and eco-tourism park.

**DAYTOY TI AMIANAN**

Found in the villages of Capponga and Ambassador in Tublay, Benguet, the sprawling forest owned by the heirs of Enrique Cosalan, an Ibaloi, is now an example of an ecosystem that balances natural agriculture with proper forest and water resources management.

Five hectares of the property were converted into an eco-tourism park while no human activity was allowed inside the remaining 15 hectares to prevent damage to fully grown trees, mangroves and a spring that supplies water to the farms.

Cosalan died in April 2006 at 93. But before his death, his wife Carmen, 80, and their 11 children already agreed not to divide the property but to make it more useful and memorable.

"Since we cannot farm the entire mountain, I suggested that we turn it into an eco-tourism park and maintain the gardens as organic," said Cosalan's daughter Marilyn.

Thus, Enca Farms was born, the name taken from Enrique and Carmen, she said.

The farm was launched as an eco-tourism area during the province's Adivay Festival in November last year and was made one of the showcases of organic farming during the Second Cordillera Organic Agriculture Congress at Benguet State University on Feb. 15-16.

"Don't expect beautifully arranged plants and flowers or nature retouched to make the park beautiful," said Sherry Manning, a US Peace Corps volunteer who handles the farm's operations.

Some people do not understand eco-tourism, she said. "It is not the view but it is the way nature is preserved."

"It is important that communities understand the concept. Just because there are pretty viewpoints or a small hiking trail does not mean you have an eco-tourism destination," she said.

The most important principle, she said, is "to preserve and protect the environment first before tourists arrive."

The area is the mountain full of trees and bushes.

But at certain areas are found farms planted to mulberry and vegetables—cauliflower, pechay, onion, pepper, bean, broccoli and lettuce.

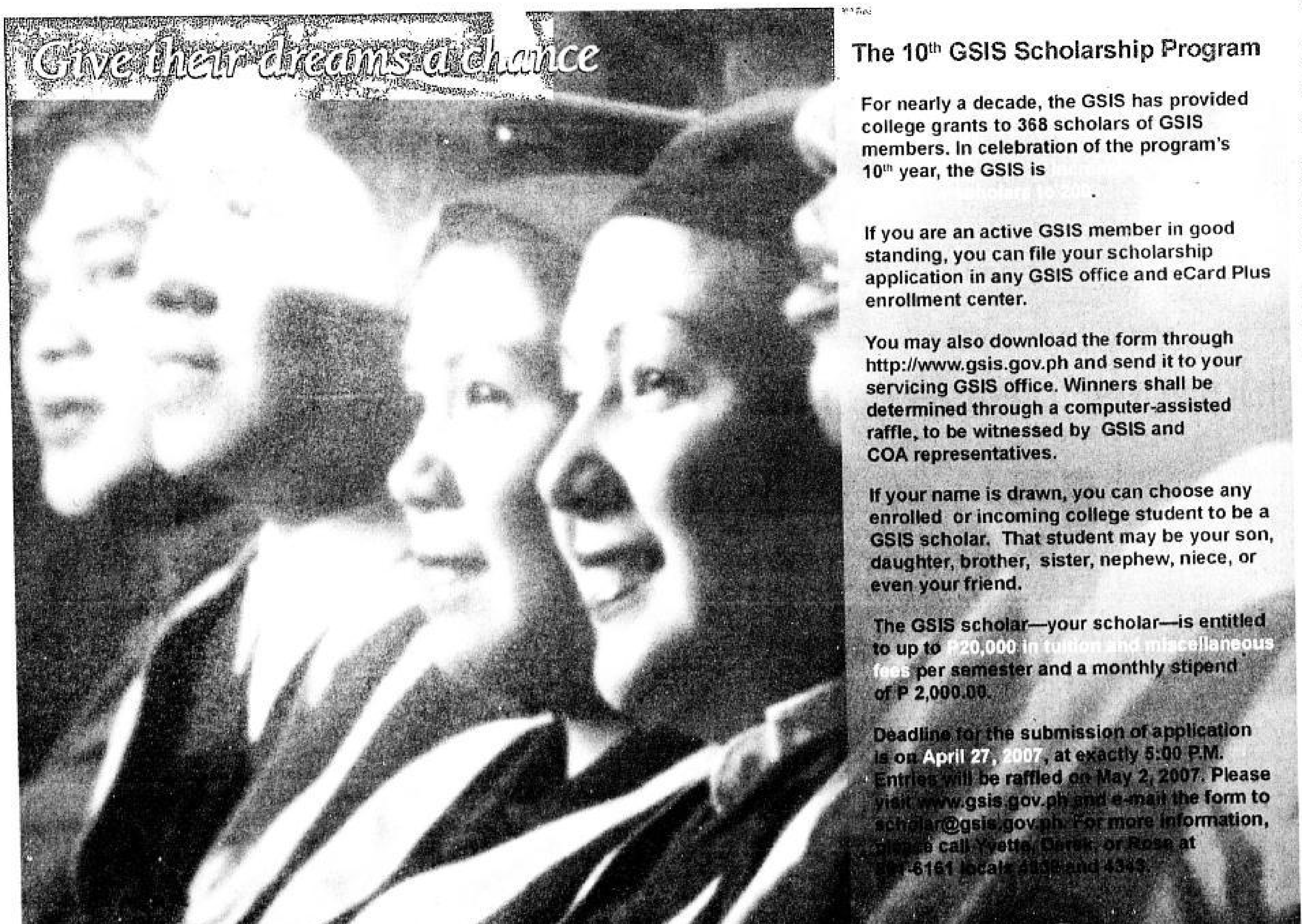
Down the mountain near a dried riverbed are greenhouses planted with lettuce. There's also a pasture land, a compost area for animal manure, a fishpond and the old Cosalan house where guests could stay overnight.

Trails along the slopes connect these sites. There is a part where one would pass through canopies and thin and tall bamboos.

Unknown to many, the area was part of a titled property that was the subject of a decision by the Supreme Court on May 7, 1992.

The court ruled that Cosalan's predecessors were in possession of the property long before Executive Order No. 217 was issued on Feb. 16, 1929. The EO had declared the area part of the Central Cordillera forest reserve; hence, the property could not be disposed of.

The Supreme Court said the land must be exempted from the EO since Aguinaya, Cosalan's mother, and Acop, his grandfather, were in possession of the land for more than 75 years.



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# The government will install farmer-beneficiaries in their land-without violence and bloodshed!

It is unfortunate that even bishops are misled by propagandists into thinking and even making a stand that installing 122 farmers in the Hacienda-Velez Malaga is as simple as forcefully escorting them into the farms with armed soldiers and policemen. They omit the fact that there are two contending groups of farmers which claim ownership over the land.

All they have to do is visit the area in Negros Occidental to get the truth. The situation is so volatile that forcing entry into the contested land on March 8 would have resulted to injuries and possibly even death among the contending farmers and law enforcers, as some 2,000 determined farmers have amassed at the entrance to repel the installation.

The truth is that the strikers have already been installed in ten hectares of prime land in the hacienda. The truth is that 20 of the 122 farmers supposedly to be installed have already left the ranks of so-called "hunger strikers" and have joined their co-workers resisting the installation.

"Shaving heads and hunger strike are easy to do", angrily said one coop member inside the farm about the propaganda tactics of the farmers camping in Manila. "*Acting sila*. We know that some of them cheat in their hunger strike and eat under the cover of blankets or during the night. But we are ready to sacrifice more for this land that we have tilled for generations".

Hda Malaga Cuenca
Multipurpose Cooperative

Agrarian reform is not just about the rule of law. It is also about the spirit of the law. Agrarian reform is about social justice. Original tillers of the land are saying that there are claimants who were never near the contested lands when they (original tillers) were expending their lives in making the lands very productive.

We invite the signatories of the manifesto calling for the forceful installation of farmers in Hacienda-Velez Malaga in La Castellana to go the ground and assess the situation more carefully. We invite the bishops to sit down with us in coming up with peaceful, win-win solution to this situation instead of whipping up religious fervor to criticize and condemn what we are trying to do for all the farmers involved, instead of just for a few.

Most of the contending farmers in Hacienda Velez are relatives. They have appealed to other parties to allow them to sit down and talk among themselves about how to apportion the land without the *pakikialam* or interference of "national", referring to NGOs and purported supporting groups.

We have successfully installed farmers in various haciendas in Negros Occidental and other parts of the country in peaceful and orderly manner. We are confident that we will be able to break this particular impasse. But we also know when a situation is explosive and when we have to act judiciously to spare lives.

Definitely, we know that agrarian reform is a critical component in the anti-poverty thrust of government. Agrarian reform has improved the lives of thousands of farmers all over the country. It is no wonder that ownership of land is a valued objective. But we also know that exclusionary tactics can breed discontent among the dispossessed.

The Secretary of DAR serves at the behest of the Chief Executive. We will not betray that trust and confidence and will act according to the mandate and in support of the economic recovery of the country.

The Department of Agrarian Reform only wants a long-lasting, peaceful resolution to this situation and that which would result in farms being productive and not those that are borne in strife and bathed in blood.

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# Meralco branch loses collections to 8 robbers

## Daring daylight heist over in 10 minutes

**By Jeannette I. Andrade**

EIGHT HEAVILY ARMED MEN BARGED INTO a branch of the Manila Electric Co. on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City yesterday morning and made off with around P800,000 in payment collections.

The daring daylight heist was pulled off in 10 minutes with one of the suspects acting as the timekeeper.

"I heard one of the suspects shout 'We have three minutes left' and then eventually, 'Five seconds' while the other robbers divested the tellers of the cash in their drawers," said Mike Saguing, a Meralco employee.

Saguing added that the suspects, who were all armed with M-16 Armalite rifles and handguns, then left with their loot. The robbers were not able to open the company vault, Saguing said.

Reports from the Quezon City Police District said the incident happened at 11:02 a.m. at the Meralco office on Commonwealth Avenue in Barangay Batasan Hills. Prior to the incident, witnesses recalled seeing a gray Tamaraw FX with license plate TRS 505 circling the area.

A witness told the INQUIRER that she noticed two men, one wearing a white T-shirt and the other a checkered polo shirt, alight from the FX carrying large black bags. They then posi-

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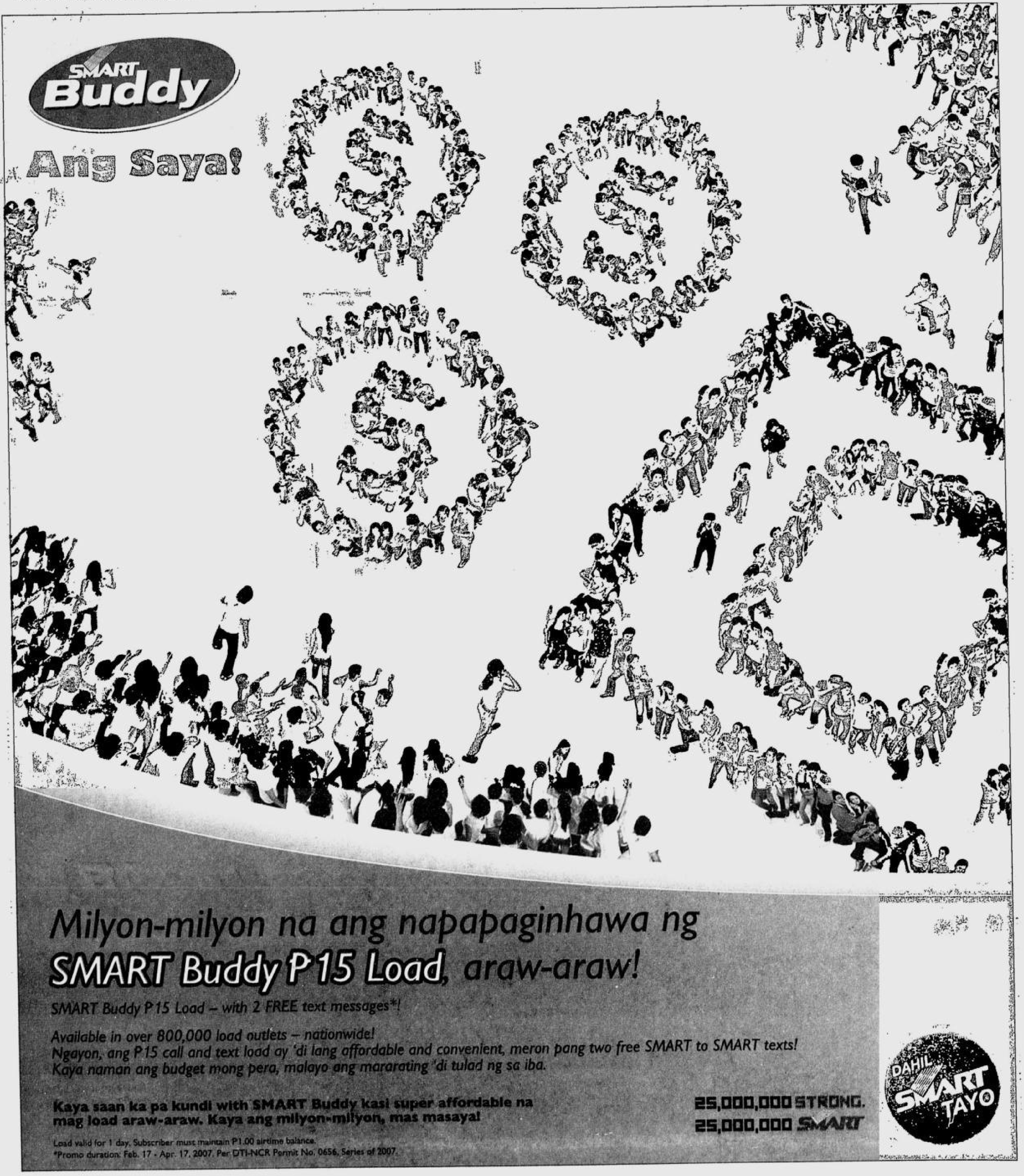

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**FAIR WARNING**
A boy reads a poster outside the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Nature Center in Quezon City urging the public to be careful while handling birds to avoid catching avian flu. So far, the country has been free of the virus which has killed several people abroad. JOAN BONDOC

# Parañaque official faces graft raps

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FOR FLUNKING THE GOVERNMENT'S lifestyle check, a Parañaque City official was relieved of his post yesterday.

In a 34-page decision, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez ordered the dismissal of the city's acting treasurer, Liberato Carabeo, for "dishonesty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service" after he failed to explain why his accumulated wealth was bigger than his annual gross salary.

Carabeo was also banned for life from holding any public office.

Gutierrez has approved the filing of graft charges against the official in the Sandiganbayan. However, forfeiture proceedings on his ill-gotten wealth was deferred until after the May 14 elections.

The Office of the Ombudsman disclosed that Carabeo's net worth rose from around P115,000 to more than P7.4 million in a span of 23 years. He started as a casual laborer of the city treasury with a daily pay of P17 in 1981. As acting city treasurer, he received an annual gross salary of about P291,000.

Investigation showed that over the last nine years, Carabeo acquired six prime lots—1,000-sq m and 1,500-sq m residential lots in Tagaytay City, a townhouse in Cavite and three separate parcels of land in Laguna.

A check with the Land Transportation Office also revealed that the Carabeos own six luxury cars, including a Ford F-150 2000 model, a Chevrolet Cassia, a Honda CRV and a Nissan Sentra.

Carabeo did not declare the 1,000-sq m lot in Tagaytay City in his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) in 2001 and in subsequent years. He included only four vehicles in his 2003 and 2004 SALN, according to an investigation by the Department of Finance-Revenue Integrity Protection Service.

An investigation also disclosed that Carabeo or his spouse acquired P640,000 worth of shares in the upscale Palms Country Club in Ayala, Alabang. The Bureau of Immigration added that Carabeo travelled abroad 15 times without a Bureau of Local Government Finance authorization as required under Executive Order No. 6 issued in 1986.

In his defense, Carabeo told the antigraft body that the money he used to travel abroad and to buy the parcels of land came from legitimate sources. But the Ombudsman dismissed his claim as immaterial.

"What is at issue here is his failure to disclose his supposed assets in his assailed SALNs," Gutierrez said in her decision.

"The only logical conclusion for these omissions is that these questioned properties overshadowed his lawful income, that is why he chose to hide them," he added.

# 200 families lose homes in Pasig fire

By Kristine L. Alave

FIRE BROKE OUT IN A DEPRESSED COMMUNITY just after midnight yesterday in Barangay Pineda, Pasig City, displacing about 200 families and damaging about P1 million worth of property, the city's Bureau of Fire Protection reported.

No one was reported hurt in the blaze that raged for 2 1/2 hours.

Arson investigator FO2 Salvador Norberte said the fire started at 12:01 a.m. on the ground floor of the house rented by Julyn and Jason Tolentino in Purok 7, Barangay Pineda.

An unattended candle lamp could have caused the fire, said Norberte who has yet to talk to the Tolentinos. The siblings, both teenagers, who fled the area to escape from angry neighbors, were last seen near the floodway in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, also in the city.

Citing reports from neighbors, Norberte said the incident was not the first time the siblings had gotten into trouble with other community residents.

In the past, the siblings were suspects in another fire incident in the area when they also allegedly left a candle unattended.

## DID YOU KNOW

ABOUT 2.3 million marriages were registered in the Philippines from 2000 to 2003. Of this number, 17 percent or over 400,000 were recorded in the National Capital Region.

*Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

# Meralco

. . . From page A21

tioned themselves at the entrance of the Meralco office. The witness added that the two were dressed nicely and did not look like they were about to pull off a robbery. She said she saw six other men head for the entrance of the Meralco branch as the suspect in the checkered polo shirt barged in. He ordered everyone inside the office to lie face down on the ground while the other suspects disarmed security guard Floro Arceno who was stationed at the entrance.

The other suspects then entered the office, disarmed the rest of the guards and started ransacking the tellers' drawers. In 10 minutes, the heist was over and the suspects casually walked toward their getaway vehicle. Minutes after the incident, a mobile patrol unit spotted the Tamaraw FX on IBP Road in Filinvest I of the same barangay.

Witnesses said the men inside the FX transferred to a white L-300 FB van without license plates and appeared headed to neighboring San Mateo town in Rizal province.

# Niño arraignment on drug charges set April 10

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FORMER CHILD ACTOR NIÑO MUHLACH is scheduled to be arraigned at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on April 10 in connection with the drug charges filed against him last week.

The accused, Angelo Jose Rocha Muhlach in real life, is expected to enter a plea of guilty or not guilty when he appears before Judge Rafael Lagos of Branch 79.

Muhlach faces charges for violating Section 11 of Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

He was arrested last week after he took a sachet containing 1.9 grams of what the police said was methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu) from a woman. The incident took place at the food court of a supermarket in Libis, Quezon City on March 13. Muhlach posted bail of P200,000 for his temporary liberty at the QCRTC last Friday.

Documents filed before the court showed that the Regional Police Intelligence and Operations Unit (RPIOU) of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) stationed in Bicutan, Taguig City received information that a drug transaction involving a certain Niño was set to take place at Shopwise, Libis on March 13.

Acting on the tip, PO3 Enrique Eusebio and PO1 Joshue Lauron positioned themselves near the accused who was seated at a table in the supermarket's food court at around 6 p.m.

The policemen then saw a woman sit beside the accused who handed him something under the table. When they saw Muhlach inspecting the sachet of suspected shabu, Eusebio and Lauron immediately got up to introduce themselves. The female suspect was able to run away. Eusebio, on the other hand, was able to arrest the actor and seize the sachet containing 1.9 grams of shabu.

Muhlach, a resident of El Niño Apartment located on the corner of Ignacio Diaz St., Barangay Kaunlaran in Quezon City, was then brought to Camp Bagong Diwa where he was detained for three nights.

2nd YOUNG MARKET MASTERS AWARDS
ymma

From left to right: Josiah Go (Founder, YMMA) & Chiqui Escareal-Go (President & Chief Advocacy Officer, Mansmith & Fielders Inc.), Monette Aldovino-De Joya (Advisory Account Manager, Innove), Carla Chavez (Senior Brand Manager, Alaska Milk), Bing Tecson (Category Manager, Lamoiyan), Dondi Gomez (Category Director & Head of Marketing Training, Unilever), Candice Alabanza-Iyog (VP for Marketing & Product, Cebu Pacific Air), Aurora Mangubat-Suarez (Publisher, Summit Media), Jane Basas (Senior Marketing Manager, Smart).

MANSMITH

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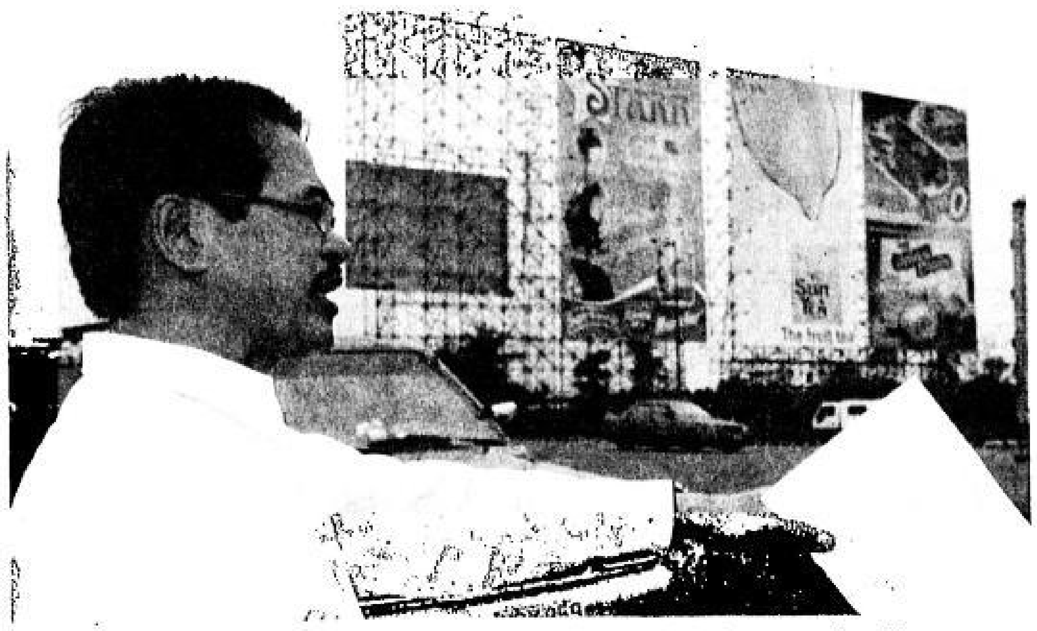
PANA PRA

# NLEX illegal billboards to go down—DPWH



PUBLIC Works Assistant Secretary Rafael Yabut points out violations committed by owners of billboards located on the North Luzon Expressway when officials inspected the structures yesterday. JOAN BONDOC

**By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

OF THE OVER 130 BILLBOARDS ON the 88-km stretch of the North Luzon Expressway, not one has complied with the law, an official of the Department of Public Works and Highways said yesterday.

Owners of the billboards have already been told that starting next week, the department would tear down the structures unless these are voluntarily taken down, National Building Code Development Office Director Emmanuel Cuntapay said.

Officials were so appalled by the flagrant violations committed by billboard owners during an inspection conducted yesterday on the expressway that they are now considering filing charges—not only against the owners but also against lot owners on which the billboards are erected.

"All of the billboards we saw do not conform with land use and zoning laws," Cuntapay told the INQUIRER.

He enumerated the violations: First, most of the billboards are situated on farm lands. Second, they are built near high-tension power wires.

They also stand less than eight meters away from the main road—a distance set by the DPWH to prevent road accidents in case the billboard collapses, he added.

They also do not have the necessary permits, since construction within national roads should have locational clearances from the DPWH, Cuntapay said.

In the notices of violation which the department started issuing almost two weeks ago, owners of erring billboards were given at least 15 days to voluntarily dismantle the structures. The deadline will lapse next week.

Last year, the DPWH demolished 51 billboards on the expressway while the Manila North Tollways Corp. voluntarily removed its three billboards to "serve as an example," MNTC Quality, Environment, Safety and Health manager Allan Jeffrey Ang also told the INQUIRER. The MNTC supervises the operations of the NLEX.

Cuntapay said billboard owners actually did not have any law in their favor to support their structures, adding that there is no land use classification providing for the erection of billboards.

Provisions for commercial and industrial land use talk about signs and signboards, but these should be "on premise," meaning, promoting only the operations done within the building on which they are situated, he also said.

From the NLEX, the officials went to the South Luzon Expressway, passing through Edsa where they also observed glaring violations.

## METROBRIEFS

### Nine workers fall ill

NINE factory workers were rushed to the hospital on Monday after eating *tulingan* (Pacific bluefin tuna) in an eatery in Marikina City, the police said yesterday. Police identified the victims as Alvin Pedrogal, 18; Rafaelito Nato, 29; Norvin Liegue, 18; Veronica Trono, 67; Arthur Balagtas, 36; Glenn Pedrones, 18; Virgilio Abante, 20; Fanny Serrano, 16 and Richelle Defabete, 26. The nine are stay-in workers in a factory located at 50 Tangulle corner Champaca Streets in Marikina Heights, Marikina City. They were taken to St. Vincent's Hospital after they called up the city's Rescue 161 emergency number at 1:21 p.m. According to a police report, the nine workers felt dizzy and nauseated after eating *tulingan* cooked in coconut milk at a food stall near their factory. Police and barangay officials are now investigating owners of the eatery that served the dish.

***Kristine L. Alave***

### Trader killed in mishap

A 29-YEAR-OLD BUSINESSMAN died in a vehicular accident when the motorcycle he was driving slammed into a cargo truck before noon in Valenzuela City yesterday. Insp. Erwin de Guzman, the chief of the City's Traffic Enforcement Unit identified the victim as Ronnie Herbias, a resident of Libis, Canumay in the city. De Guzman said Herbias was on board his motorcycle when he hit a truck and fell off his vehicle. He was declared dead on arrival upon reaching a hospital.

***Nancy C. Carvajal***

# Tullahan bridge south lane open to traffic

**By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

THREE DAYS AFTER CLOSING BOTH lanes of the 73-year-old Tullahan Bridge in Valenzuela City, the Department of Public Works and Highways yesterday opened a portion of its southbound lane to traffic.

The demolition of the bridge on MacArthur Highway has already begun, but a single lane for southbound light vehicles—including passenger jeeps—will remain open until March 30, project engineer Ed Santos told the INQUIRER.

Buses and trucks are still being rerouted to the parallel North Luzon Expressway, he added.

Although the mayors in the Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava) area have asked the DPWH to postpone the rehabilitation of the bridge, the agency went ahead and closed it on Friday morning. The mayors fear that shutting down the bridge will worsen traffic in their areas.

But after a meeting on Monday night, Santos, other project officials, Malabon Mayor Canuto Oreta and Valenzuela Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian agreed to partially reopen the bridge for at least 10 days.

According to Santos, the compromise was reached out of consideration for students who were set to take their exams this week. The closure of the bridge would mean that they would have to walk quite a distance to get to their classes.

He said that apart from the completion of two pedestrian footbridges parallel to the bridge, the DPWH would also speed up the repair of M.H. Del Pilar Street, one of several alternate routes.

According to the DPWH, Tullahan Bridge needs to be rehabilitated immediately since its steel parts are already corroded.

# Caloocan, Navotas officials favor peace pact

**By Nancy C. Carvajal**

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN CALOOCAN and Navotas who are running in the May 14 elections are in favor of signing a peace covenant as proposed by the top police official in Metro Manila.

Deputy Director General Reynaldo Varilla, National Capital Region Police Office chief, recently ordered the directors of the five police districts in the metropolis to take preventive measures against election-related violent incidents.

Among the measures he suggested was the signing of a peace covenant among candidates in areas under their jurisdiction.

"It's a good move and I'm for it as long as it's for peaceful and orderly elections," said Caloocan Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio.

Asistio, who is serving his third and last term as congressman of the city's second district, is running for mayor.

His brother, former Caloocan Mayor Luis "Boy" Asistio, is planning to run against him.

Boy's partner, Nadia Montenegro, told the INQUIRER that she sees no problem with signing a peace covenant with other candidates. Montenegro is reportedly running for congresswoman in the city's first district.

"No one has talked to me about it yet but I am inclined to sign a covenant with other candidates," Montenegro told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Incumbent Caloocan Mayor Enrico Echiverri said he was also in favor of the police proposal.

"In principle, I would agree to a covenant," reelectionist Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco told the INQUIRER.

# New home for Parañaque prisoners

**By Julie M. Aurelio**

PARAÑAQUE CITY JAIL INMATES WILL start enjoying the comforts of a spacious new home beginning today with their transfer to a new building built on a 2,990 sq m lot on Coastal Road in Barangay La Huerta.

Mayor Florencio Bernabe Jr. will lead officials in the ceremonial ribbon-cutting to symbolize the turnover of the building to local authorities at 4 p.m. today.

"We achieved three important objectives by constructing this modern detention facility. First, we can decongest our jail and provide the inmates with more space, better facilities and more humane living conditions," Bernabe said.

The new city jail, which was built at a cost of P47.5 million, is close to the headquarters of the Parañaque City police station which will also be relocated to Dr. Arcadio Santos Ave. (Sucat Road).

The new four-story building can accommodate 1,000 detainees. At present, there are 743 (90 female and 653 male) inmates housed in the old city jail.

Located on the ground floor is a visitors' area, a therapeutic room, a kitchen, a multipurpose hall, warden's room, personnel quarters, administration office, record armory, a ward, treatment room and dental room.

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# Zimbabwe threatens to expel Western envoys

HARARE—ZIMBABWE ON Monday threatened to expel Western ambassadors it accuses of backing a drive to oust President Robert Mugabe and barred opposition leaders from foreign travel until they appear in court.

Foreign Affairs Minister Simbarashe Mumbengegwi told Zimbabwe state television (ZTV) that he had warned envoys accredited to Harare that Mugabe's government would not hesitate to boot out those who support opposition politics.

"I summoned the ambassadors, and I told them that Zimbabwe will not allow any interferance in its internal affairs and that those who are going to continue funding and supporting this program to (remove the government from power) will be expelled," he said during ZTV news bulletin in the local Shona language.

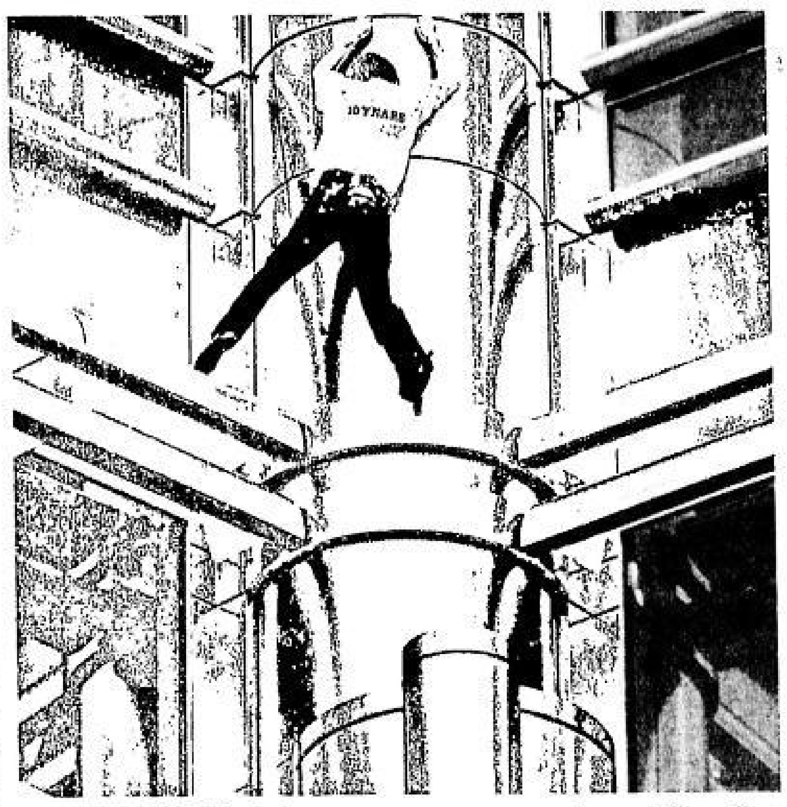
The threat followed a statement by Zimbabwean police that opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai and his colleagues would be grounded in the country until their case has been dealt with by the courts.

The US ambassador, Christopher Dell, walked out of the meeting after Mumbengegwi failed to give an assurance that the diplomats would be able to respond to his statement, the State Department said in Washington.

"The United States will continue to speak and act steadfastly in support of the people of Zimbabwe's right to democracy," it said in a statement.

Mugabe has come under heavy criticism for a new crackdown on the opposition, which he accuses of trying to organize anti-government protests that he says are bankrolled by some Western countries.

Tsvangirai, head of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and dozens of other opposition figures say they were savagely beaten in police custody. Images of their battered faces prompted a wave of international condemnation of a government which is already battling a severe economic crisis. *Reuters*



**FRENCHMAN Alain Robert maneuvers across a column while scaling the landmark Petronas Twin Towers in downtown Kuala Lumpur, March 20.** AFP

# Climate change reports watered down

WASHINGTON—A HOUSE committee released documents Monday that showed hundreds of instances in which a White House official who was previously an oil-industry lobbyist edited government climate reports to play up uncertainty or play down evidence of a human role in global warming.

In a hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the official, Philip A. Cooney, who left government in 2005, defended the changes he made in government reports over several years, saying the editing was part of the normal White House review process and reflected findings in a climate report written for President Bush by the National Academy of Sciences in 2001.

They were the first public statements on the issue by Cooney, the former chief of staff of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Before joining the White House, Cooney was the "climate team leader" for the American Petroleum Institute, the main industry lobby in Washington.

He was hired by Exxon Mobil after resigning in 2005 following reports on the editing in The New York Times. The White House said his resignation was not related to the disclosures.

Cooney said his past work opposing restrictions on global warming gases for the oil industry had had no bearing on his actions once he joined the White House. "When I came to the White House," he testified, "my sole loyalties were to the president and his administration."

Cooney, who has no scientific background, said he had based his editing and recommendations on what he had seen in good faith as the "most authoritative and current views of the state of scientific knowledge." *NYT*

# French 'Spiderman' arrested for climbing Petronas Towers

KUALA LUMPUR—FRENCH "Spiderman" Alain Robert was arrested on Tuesday two-thirds of the way through a daredevil attempt to scale Malaysia's Petronas Twin Towers without ropes or safety equipment.

The 44-year-old rock-climber, brandishing a Malaysian flag, was grabbed by firemen waiting on the 60th floor of one of the 88-storey towers, previously the world's tallest buildings.

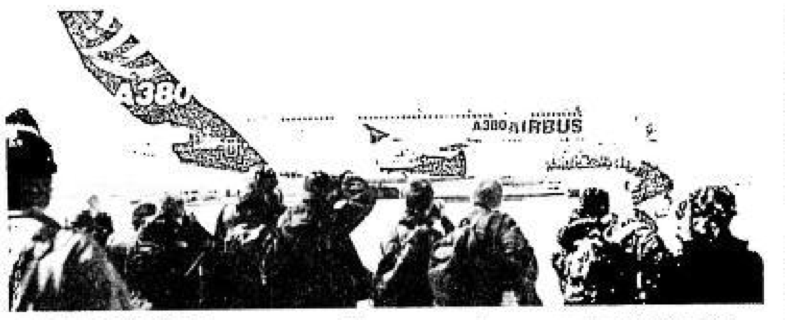
"As he was climbing up, we managed to coax him to stop and get back into the building," fire department spokesperson Christopher Chong told reporters.

"He smiled, said, 'Okay' and waved the Malaysian flag at us before we pulled him in through the window." Robert was stopped on the same floor when he attempted the same stunt exactly 10 years ago.

A crowd of up to 500 onlookers cheered the Frenchman as he was bundled into a waiting police car below.

"We are arresting him because he climbed the building without a permit from the management," a police officer said. *AFP*

# Airbus A380 superjumbo wows crowds on US debut



**AN AIRBUS A380 passes a media group out on a runway during its inaugural visit to New York's Kennedy International Airport, Monday, Mar. 19.** AP

LOS ANGELES—THE GIANT Airbus A380 superjumbo landed on US soil for the first time Monday, dazzling large crowds gathered in Los Angeles and New York to catch a glimpse of the world's biggest passenger plane.

The 555-seat double-decker behemoth with a wingspan the size of a football pitch descended smoothly through grey, overcast skies to touch down at Los Angeles International Airport at approximately 9:28 a.m.

Several hundred guests invited to greet the A380's arrival exploded with cheers and applause as the plane's wheels kissed the runway asphalt A few minutes earlier, another Airbus A380 carrying 500 guests flying from Frankfurt landed at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport.

The arrival of the transatlantic test flights marked a symbolic milestone in the troubled multi-billion dollar development of the world's biggest commercial aircraft, which has been hit by delays and several cancelled orders.

Airbus, a unit of the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company, designed the plane to challenge the dominance of Boeing's jumbo 747, but so far no US carrier has placed an order for it.

The A380 also wowed thousands of onlookers who had begun taking up vantage points around the airport hours before its arrival. *AFP*

## WORLDBRIEFS

### Nursing home fire

KAMYSHEVATSKAYA, RUSSIA—A fire swept through a nursing home in southern Russia on Tuesday, killing 62 people—a toll that authorities said was inflated by safety violations, toxic materials, negligence and the long distance from the nearest firehouse. A night watchman ignored two fire alarms before reporting the blaze, and it took firefighters nearly an hour to get from a larger town to the nursing home in the Azov Sea coast village of Kamyshevatskaya, where the fire station was closed last year, emergency officials said. In addition to the dead, 35 people were injured, regional emergency official Sergei Petrov said. There were 97 people in the building when the fire broke out, including four employees, he said. *AP*

### Pakistan clashes

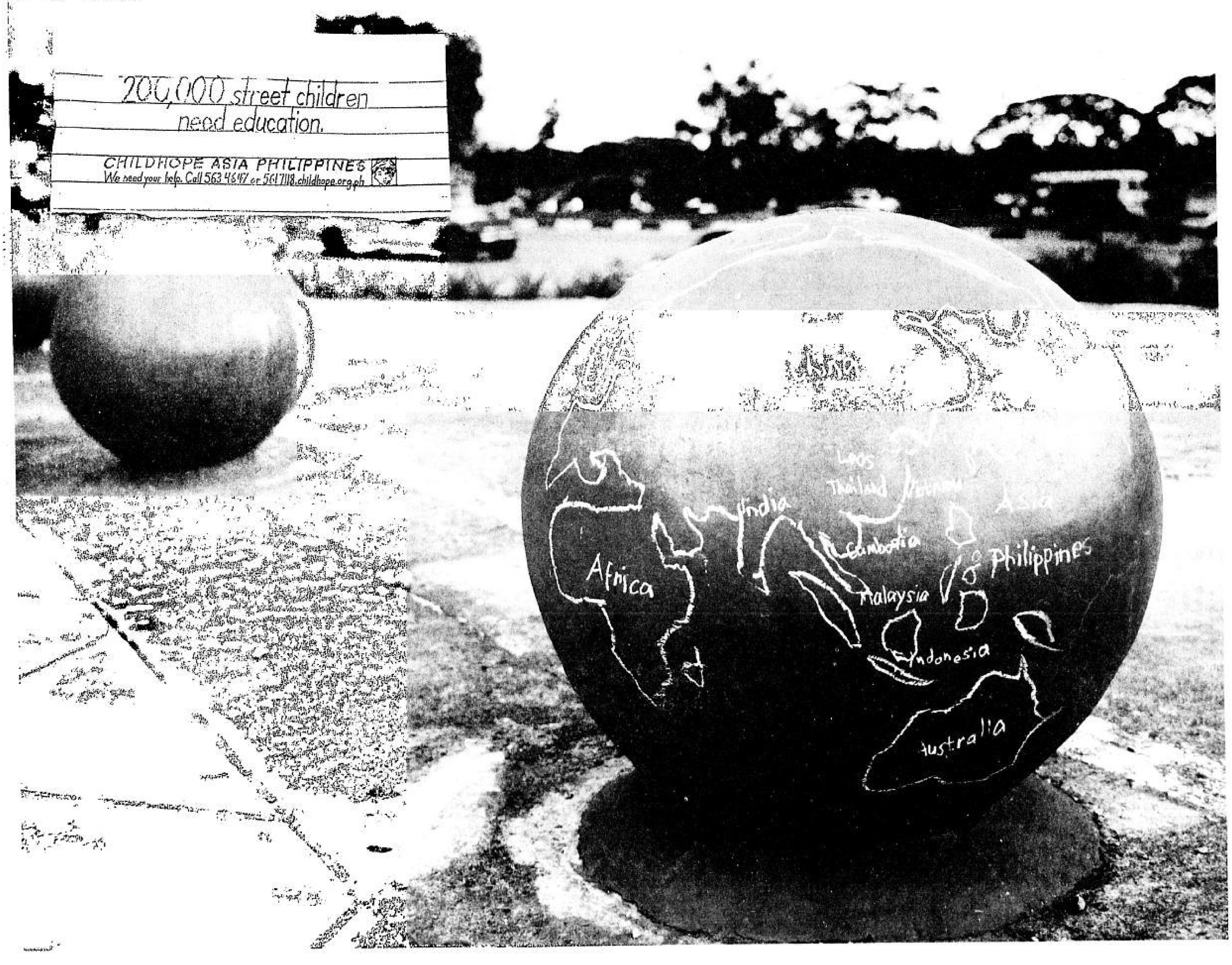
WANA, PAKISTAN—Twenty-four people have been killed in fighting between heavily-armed Uzbek al-Qaida militants and local tribesmen in northwest Pakistan, officials said Tuesday. Heavy exchanges of rocket and mortar fire broke out on Monday and continued on Tuesday in Kalusha town in the troubled tribal region of South Waziristan, which borders Afghanistan, security officials said. Four of the dead were teenagers killed when a shell hit a crowd of students, seven were local tribesmen and 13 were followers of wanted Uzbek militant Tahir Yuldashev, security officials said on condition of anonymity. *AFP*

### Bus in flames

BANGKOK—A double-decker bus burst into flames and careered down a central Thailand hillside Tuesday, killing at least 29 people, as desperate passengers scrambled through windows to escape, police said. Another 37 people were injured when the bus caught fire on a major highway as it headed toward Bangkok. "There were 29 people killed and 37 wounded. I don't know how serious their injuries are," Lt. Col. Chanathis Wongwairak, head of the provincial highway patrol, told AFP by telephone. "Police spent 10 minutes extinguishing the fire, but the victims had already died inside the wreckage." He said the cause of the fire was still under investigation but that it may have started in the undercarriage. *AFP*

### Cholera outbreak

MOGADISHU—Dozens of residents of the Somali capital fled on Tuesday following a night of mortar attacks, while another threat—disease—took its toll in the south. Doctors reported that as many as 22 people died in the past 24 hours in southern Somalia from a suspected cholera outbreak. *AP*



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# N. Korea nuke talks stalled over frozen funds

BEIJING—SIX-PARTY TALKS aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear threat stalled unexpectedly on Tuesday, hampered by a lingering row over frozen funds and denting hopes of turning the focus to disabling Pyongyang's main reactor.

The United States said on Monday that $25 million frozen at Macau's Banco Delta Asia (BDA), which Washington said was complicit in North Korea's illegal financial dealings, would be released and turned over to Pyongyang for humanitarian use as soon as possible.

But the timing of the release was still contingent on talks between North Korea and Macau, and in the meantime, the North was refusing to attend a planned chief delegates meeting at six-party talks in Beijing.

"According to host China, North Korea is saying that it will not take part in talks unless it confirms the funds at BDA are transferred to its account in China," Japan's chief negotiator, Kenichiro Sasae, told reporters.

"China urged North Korea to come forward, but North Korea did not do so. There was no progress at all today." A spokesperson at the media center for China, which chairs the talks that also group the two Koreas, the United States, Japan and Russia, said the chief delegates meeting had been cancelled.

"After the bilateral talks, there was not enough time left," the spokesperson said.

US envoy Christopher Hill said earlier he hoped the day's talks could focus on how to see through North Korea's pledge to shut down its Yongbyon nuclear reactor by a mid-April deadline in exchange for economic aid and security assurances.

He also wanted to begin mapping out future disarmament steps agreed in the breakthrough Feb. 13 deal.

"Clearly we have to meet all the 60-day milestones. That's why we're here—to review that, and we'll be doing that today," Hill told reporters, referring to the April date.

Tasks for the six parties after the deadline involve disabling the shut reactor and require North Korea to report other nuclear activities.

But the talks are still shadowed by the Macau banking issue, which caused North Korea to boycott the negotiations for more than a year.

It came back to the table in December, months after conducted its first nuclear test, which drew international condemnation and UN financial and weapons sanctions.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency cited Macau banking sources as saying that the Macau government would transfer the funds on Wednesday morning.

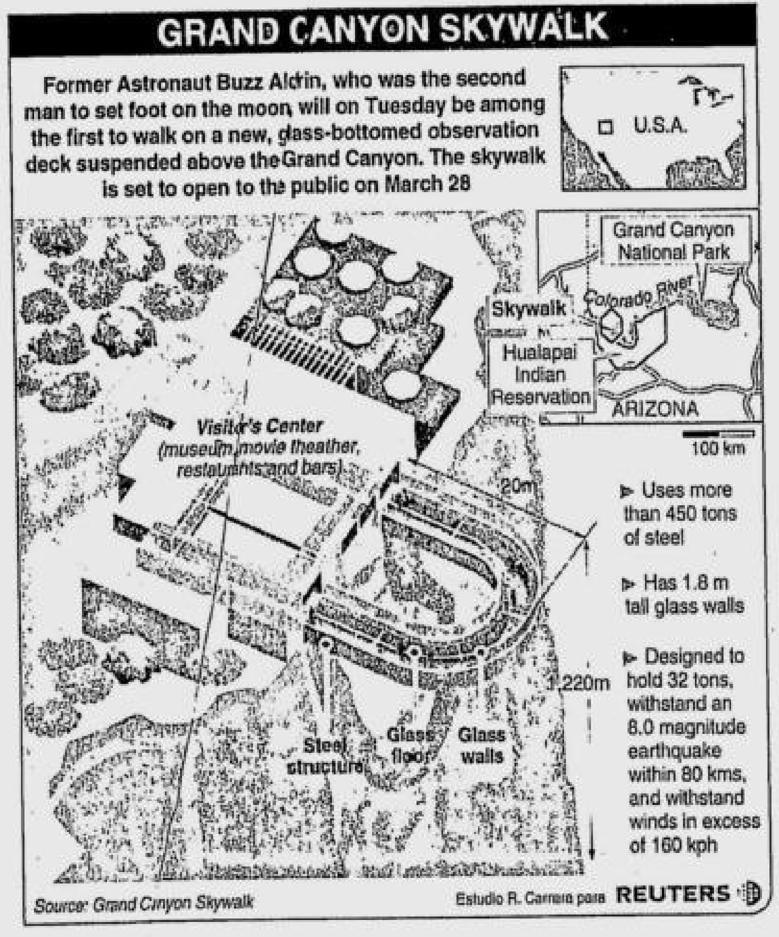
Even if the frozen funds are released, the talks, scheduled to run through Wednesday, still face issues likely to test the wary and mercurial North.

Those include North Korea's obligation under the February deal to report a full list of its nuclear activities, which will raise the question of highly enriched uranium.

North Korea has denied enriching uranium, which can be used to make the fissile material in nuclear weapons. US officials have recently steered away from the Bush administration's earlier claims that Pyongyang was close to mastering the process. *Reuters*

**GRAND CANYON SKYWALK**

Former Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, who was the second man to set foot on the moon, will on Tuesday be among the first to walk on a new, glass-bottomed observation deck suspended above the Grand Canyon. The skywalk is set to open to the public on March 28


U.S.A.
Grand Canyon National Park
Skywalk
Colorado River
Hualapai Indian Reservation
ARIZONA
100 km
Visitor's Center (museum, movie theather, restaurants and bars)
20m
220m
Steel structure
Glass floor
Glass walls
Uses more than 450 tons of steel
Has 1.8 m tall glass walls
Designed to hold 32 tons, withstand an 8.0 magnitude earthquake within 80 kms, and withstand winds in excess of 160 kph

Source: Grand Cinyon Skywalk     Estudio R. Carrera para REUTERS

# Saddam's deputy Ramadan hanged

BAGHDAD—IRAQ HANGED Saddam Hussein's former vice president Taha Yassin Ramadan before dawn for crimes against humanity on Tuesday, the fourth anniversary of the US-led war that toppled the regime.

He is the fourth ex-regime figure, including Saddam himself, to be executed for the killing of 148 Shiites from the town of Dujail after the ousted Iraqi strongman escaped an assassination bid there in 1982.

"Ramadan was hanged at 3:05 a.m. today," said Bassem Ridha, senior advisor to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, saying it took place at an undisclosed Baghdad location.

"The execution was smooth with no violation," Ridha said, after an international outcry over the manner of the previous hangings of Saddam and his former cohorts.

Lawyer Badie Aref said on Monday that the US military had allowed Ramadan, who was aged almost 80, to call his family.

"He was very calm and composed. He asked his family and friends to pray for him and said that he was not afraid of death," Aref told AFP.

It was the Popular Army created by Ramadan which was accused of rounding up suspects after the attempt on Saddam's life. In all 148 were arrested but never seen again.

Saddam himself was hanged for the Dujail killings on Dec. 30 and was followed to the gallows by two henchmen, Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti and Awad Ahmed al-Bandar, on Jan. 15.

Ridha said Ramadan's clothes and other belongings were handed over to his lawyer and his body would be delivered to relatives later on Tuesday.

An appeals court had on Thursday confirmed the death sentence first imposed against Ramadan on Feb. 12 by the Iraqi High Tribunal which is trying former regime officials.

He was originally given a life sentence in November, but the prosecution filed a petition demanding that he too be executed.

**RAMADAN** AFP

On hearing the February verdict, Ramadan swore his innocence, saying: "May God take revenge against everyone who rendered me injustice." US-based Human Rights Watch had urged Iraq not to carry out the death penalty, saying there was insufficient evidence linking Ramadan to the Dujail murders.

"Ramadan was convicted in an unfair trial, and increasing his punishment from life imprisonment to death reeks of vengeance," Richard Dicker of the organization's International Justice Program said last month.

Despite global outrage over the executions, Iraqi leaders have said they are determined to punish former regime officials.

"There is no revenge in the execution of Ramadan or the other former regime officials," a senior official said last week.

"The crimes of these people have rendered thousands of women as widows. Their executions are gift to millions of Iraqis who suffered under Saddam." Ramadan, born in 1938, was captured by Kurdish fighters in his birthplace of Mosul in northern Iraq in August 2003 and turned over to US forces.

In 1970, he formed the Popular Army, the Baath Party's armed wing, and was a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, the country's highest authority under Saddam. *AFP*

# Jury issues delay Conrad Black's trial

CHICAGO—THE START OF Conrad Black's criminal fraud trial was delayed until Tuesday after his lawyers complained that publicity about a key witness against the former media baron might have tainted the jury.

Judge Amy St. Eve of the US District Court agreed on Monday to quiz each potential juror in a final group of 20 after Black's lead attorney, Edward Genson, told her he had "real concerns" about Black getting a fair trial.

"It impacts what we want, and what everyone wants in this case, which is a fair trial," Genson told the judge.

St. Eve later delayed swearing in the jury and the start of opening statements until Tuesday. In addition to the questions raised by Genson, there was a glitch when one member of the jury group failed to show up in court because of a miscommunication, a lawyer involved in the case said.

The question posed by Genson involved two settlements made within the past three days by Black's former partner, David Radler, and whether the jurors might have been exposed to publicity about them.

Radler, who was instrumental in expanding Black's global publishing empire through Hollinger International Inc. over more than three decades, has pleaded guilty in the case and is the key prosecution witness. *Reuters*

# Al-Qaida operative confesses to USS Cole bombing

WASHINGTON—A CAPTURED al-Qaida operative has confessed to being the mastermind of the 2000 USS Cole bombing and a key participant in the 1998 East Africa embassy bombings, according to a Pentagon transcript released Monday.

Wallid bin Attash said he bought the explosives and recruited members of the team that rammed an explosives-laden boat into the side of Cole while it was refueling in the Yemeni port of Aden.

"I put together the plan for the operation a year and a half prior to the operation," he told a military panel convened in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba March 12 to determine his status as an enemy combatant, according to a transcript of the hearing.

Seventeen US sailors were killed and 39 others were wounded in the attack, which nearly sank the billion dollar state-of-the-art destroyer.

Attash said he was with al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in Kandahar, Afghanistan at the time of the attack.

The bombings of the USS Cole and US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998 were the most serious al-Qaida attacks before Sept. 11, 2001, when hijackers flew airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, another top al-Qaida operative, confessed during a March 10 hearing to masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks, "from A to Z," and 30 other attacks and plots—but not the Cole or the embassy bombings.

Seven of 14 top terrorist suspects who were moved to Guantanamo in September from secret CIA detention centers overseas have now had their cases heard by the military status review tribunals, defense officials said.

Four transcripts have been released. Still under review is the transcript of a hearing last week of Abd Al-Rahim Al-Nashiri, al-Qaida's alleged operations chief in the Arabian peninsula until his capture in 2002, they said. *AFP*

# Quitting smoking makes arteries relax, says study

WASHINGTON—TEN YEARS AFTER quitting, former smokers' arteries returned to a level of stiffness seen in nonsmokers, according to an article published Monday by the American Heart Association.

"Smoking a single cigarette, passive or second-hand smoking and chronic smoking all lead to stiffer arteries, which in turn increase resistance in the blood vessels and, therefore, increase the work that the heart must do," said Noor Ahmed Jatoi, lead author of the study published in Hypertension, the Journal of the American Heart Association.

"Smoking is a major risk factor, not only for lung disease and cancer, but also for heart attack, stroke and heart failure," said Jatoi of Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.

Arterial wall stiffness, or arteriosclerosis, is associated with high blood pressure, stroke and other circulatory problems.

Jatoi and his group studied 554 persons who had high blood pressure but had never been treated for it, 56 percent of whom were women and with an average age of 47.

They divided them into three groups, of 150 smokers, 136 former smokers and 268 who had never smoked.

"We categorized ex-smokers according to how long they were off cigarettes: under one year; more than one but less than 10 years; and more than 10 years of smoking cessation," Jatoi said.

The researchers used pulse wave analysis to measure arterial stiffness, the study said.

They found that among current smokers and those who had quit less than one year prior had significantly stiffer arterial walls than non-smokers.

Arterial stiffness improved somewhat after quitting up to 10 years, but it was only among persons who had quit smoking for more than 10 years whose arteries were back to normal.

"Our study reinforces the message that smoking cessation is an important step smokers can take to enhance the quality and length of their lives," said Jatoi. *AFP*

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MIND-WANDERING RESEARCH

# Scientists are finally paying attention to not paying attention

NEW YORK—RESEARCHERS ARE studying a pervasive psychological phenomenon in which an individual's mind wanders.

Mainstream psychology has not paid much attention to this common mental habit. But a spate of new studies is chipping away at its mysteries and scientists say the topic is beginning to gain visibility.

Someday, such research may turn up ways to help students keep their focus on textbooks and lectures, and drivers to keep their minds on the road. It may reveal ways to reap payoffs from the habit.

And it might shed light on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which can include an unusually severe inability to focus that causes trouble in multiple areas of life.

More generally, scientists say, mind-wandering is worth studying because it is just too common to ignore.

Michael Kane, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, sampled the thoughts of students at eight random times a day for a week. He found that on average, they were not thinking about what they were doing 30 percent of the time.

For some students it was between 80 and 90 percent of the time. Out of the 126 participants, only one denied any mind-wandering at the sampled moments.

Prior work has also turned up average rates of 30 percent to 40 percent in everyday life.

"If you want to understand people's mental lives, this is a phenomenon we ought to be thinking about," Kane said.

Of course, a lot of mind-wandering is harmless, as when you think about a work problem while munching a cheeseburger. The problem comes when it distracts you from something you should be paying attention to.

The result of that can be tragic. Kane noted the 2003 case of a college professor who drove to work in Irvine, California, one hot August day, parked and went to his office. Whatever was going through his mind, he had lost track of the fact that his 10-month-old son was in the back seat. The boy died in the heat. In 2004, virtually the same thing happened in Santa Ana, California. *AP*

# The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

# Over 100 killed in coal mine blast in Russia

ULYANOVSKAYA MINE, RUSSIA—RESCUERS on Tuesday tried to reach four miners still missing underground at a Siberian coal mine after a gas explosion killed at least 106 people including most of the pit's top managers.

Smoke, pockets of gas and collapsed roofs were hampering rescue efforts in the warren of shafts nearly 300 meters underground at the Ulyanovskaya mine in the region of Kemerovo, officials said.

"Our latest information is that 106 people have died and the fate of four people remains unclear," said an Emergencies Ministry spokesperson. Ninety-three people have been brought safely to the surface.

Guards barred most journalists from entering the mine complex, which is surrounded by birch forests and soot-blackened snow. Only reporters from state-controlled television channels were allowed in.

Vans drove out periodically through the gates, carrying away the bodies of the dead.

Emergency Ministry officials arranged for grieving relatives to wait at a nearby hotel, where psychologists were providing assistance. Local authorities declared three days of mourning, cancelling entertainment events and flying flags at half mast.

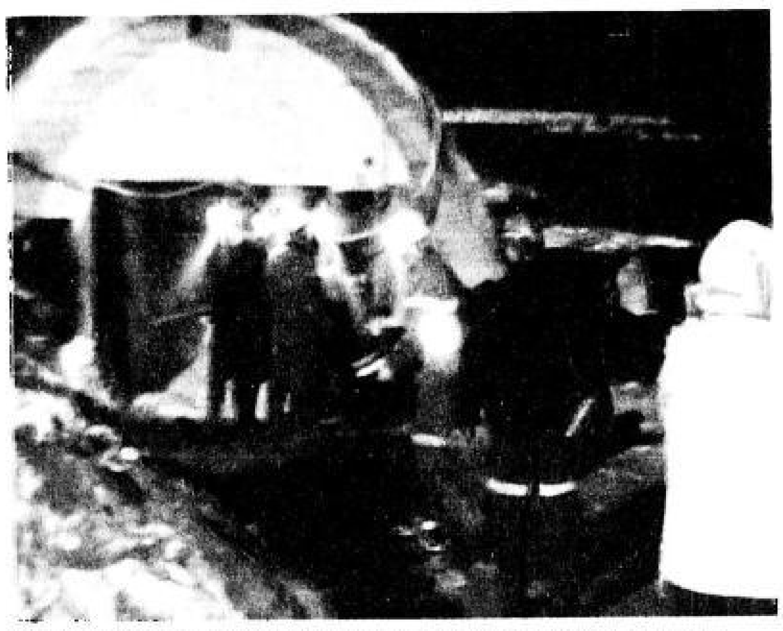
Amongst the dead was a visiting Briton, who was carrying out a coal reserves audit underground when a methane gas explosion ripped through the mine, Itar-Tass news agency reported.

British mining consultancy IMC confirmed that one of its employees, Ian Robertson, was in the mine at the time of the blast but could not comment on what had happened to him.

Accidents in Russia's mines are frequent but the Ulyanovskaya complex was only opened in 2002 and inaugurated on the 50th birthday of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Authorities believed a failure to follow safety rules was the most likely cause of the disaster.

"The main theory being considered by the prosecutor's office is violations of mining work rules," Kemerovo region prosecutor Alexei Bugayets told Interfax news agency.



**RESCUERS** enter Ulyanovskaya mine near Novokuznetsk, about 2,977 km east of Moscow in this image from the television broadcast early Tuesday, March 20. AP

Putin dispatched Emergency Minister Sergei Shoigu to oversee the rescue operation at the mine and rescuers were drafted in from neighboring areas to help.

About 3,500 km east of Moscow, the mine is at the heart of Siberia's Kuznetsk basin, or Kuzbass, which holds some of the biggest coal reserves in the world.

Television pictures showed rescuers with coal darkened faces emerging from the mine and scores of ambulances were on standby to treat those brought to the surface.

An estimated 203 people were working at the mine when the blast occurred. Officials said some miners had managed to reach the surface alive.

Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov called for tougher safety rules at mines. *Reuters*

# Bush warns vs swift US troop withdrawal

WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush warned Monday it was too soon for US troops in Iraq to "pack up and go home" as the war slid into its fifth year clouded by pessimism and political angst on the home front.

Without ever using the word "victory," Bush said after speaking to Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and the top US military commander in Iraq that his new plan to pacify the war-wracked country could show success in months.

"It could be tempting to look at the challenges in Iraq and conclude our best option is to pack up and go home," Bush said, four years to the day after he announced that American troops were fighting to depose Saddam Hussein.

"That may be satisfying in the short run, but I believe the consequences for American security would be devastating," Bush said, warning that a US departure would spark chaos in Iraq which would engulf the region.

"The terrorists could emerge from the chaos with a safe haven in Iraq to replace the one they had in Afghanistan, which they used to plan the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001," Bush said in an eight-minute televised speech.

The embattled president has vowed to veto an emergency war-funding bill for Iraq and Afghanistan if it reaches his desk still containing language, pushed by Democrats, that calls for US forces to be out of Iraq by September 2008 at the latest.

Bush also warned against expecting easy or quick results from a new US-led, Baghdad-centered security effort which will see more than 21,500 extra troops pour into Iraq to secure the strife-torn capital andrestive al-Anbar province.

"The Baghdad security plan is still in its early stages and success will take months, not days or weeks," Bush said in his statement, which preempted regular programing on US television networks and ran on cable news channels.

Democrats, who won back the US Congress in November elections fueled by anger at the war, marked what they called "a series of failures bythe Bush administration" in planning and prosecuting the war.

"As the Iraq war enters its fifth year, American troops are still waiting for the Bush administration to present a strategy that will allow them to complete the mission so they can come home," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said in a statement.

Bush also paid tribute to the 3,200 US troops "who have given their lives in this struggle" and argued that despite still raging on, the Iraq war had yielded considerable progress. *AFP*

# Russia issues ultimatum to Iran

WASHINGTON—RUSSIA HAS warned Iran it will withhold nuclear fuel for Iran's atomic power plant unless Tehran suspends uranium enrichment as demanded by the UN Security Council, the New York Times reported Tuesday, citing unnamed US, European and Iranian officials.

Igor Ivanov, secretary of Russia's National Security Council, delivered the ultimatum last week to Ali Hosseini Tash, Iran's deputy chief nuclear negotiator, the paper wrote, quoting officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Moscow infuriated Tehran last week by cancelling its March deadline to deliver fuel for the $1 billion plant it is constructing near the Iranian city of Bushehr.

In public statements, Russia has accused Iran of failing to make payments owed to Moscow for the Bushehr project.

But European officials told the Times that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had informed some European governments last month that Russia made a decision not to deliver the nuclear fuel for the plant and that Moscow would publicly say the sole reason was financial, the paper wrote. *AFP*

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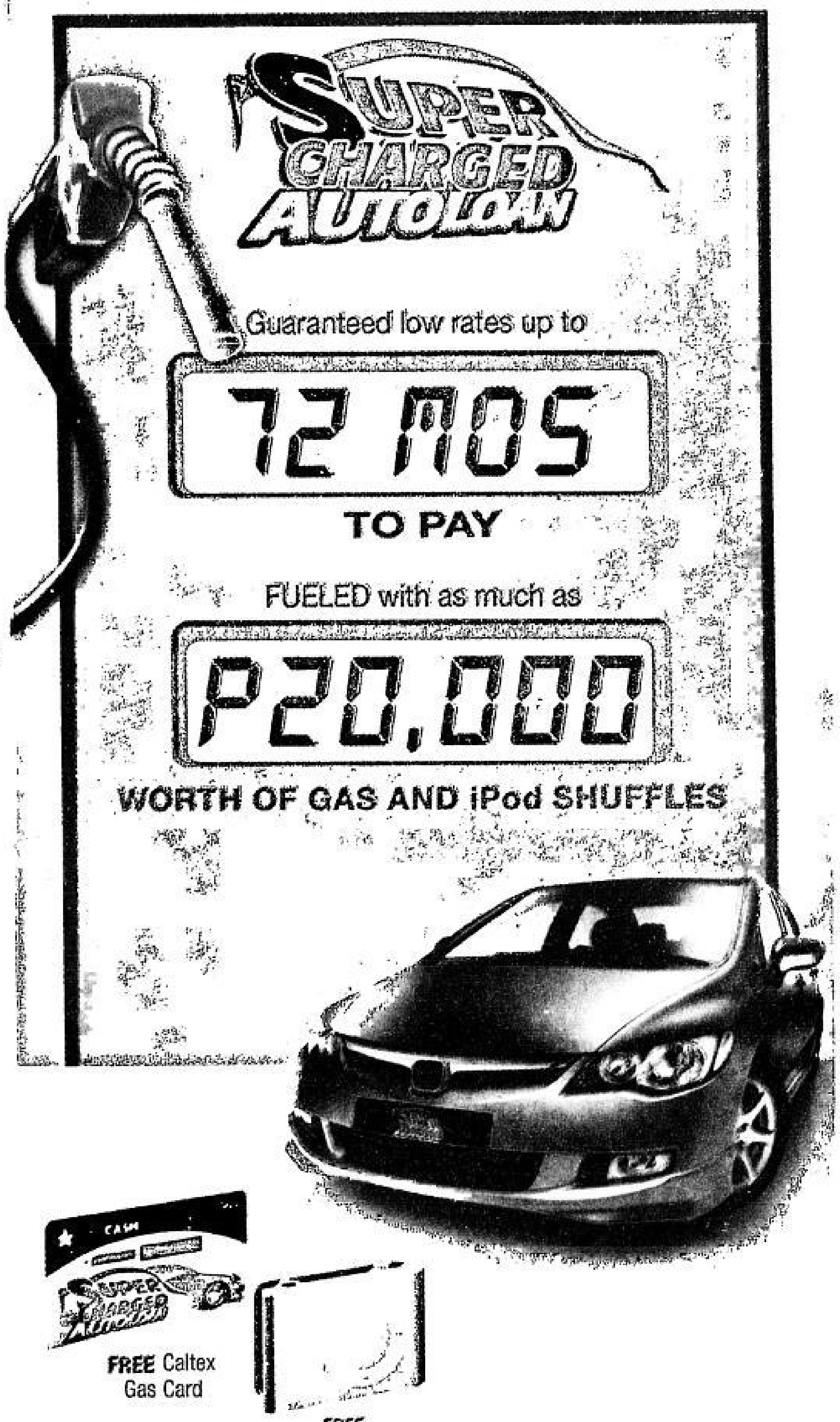

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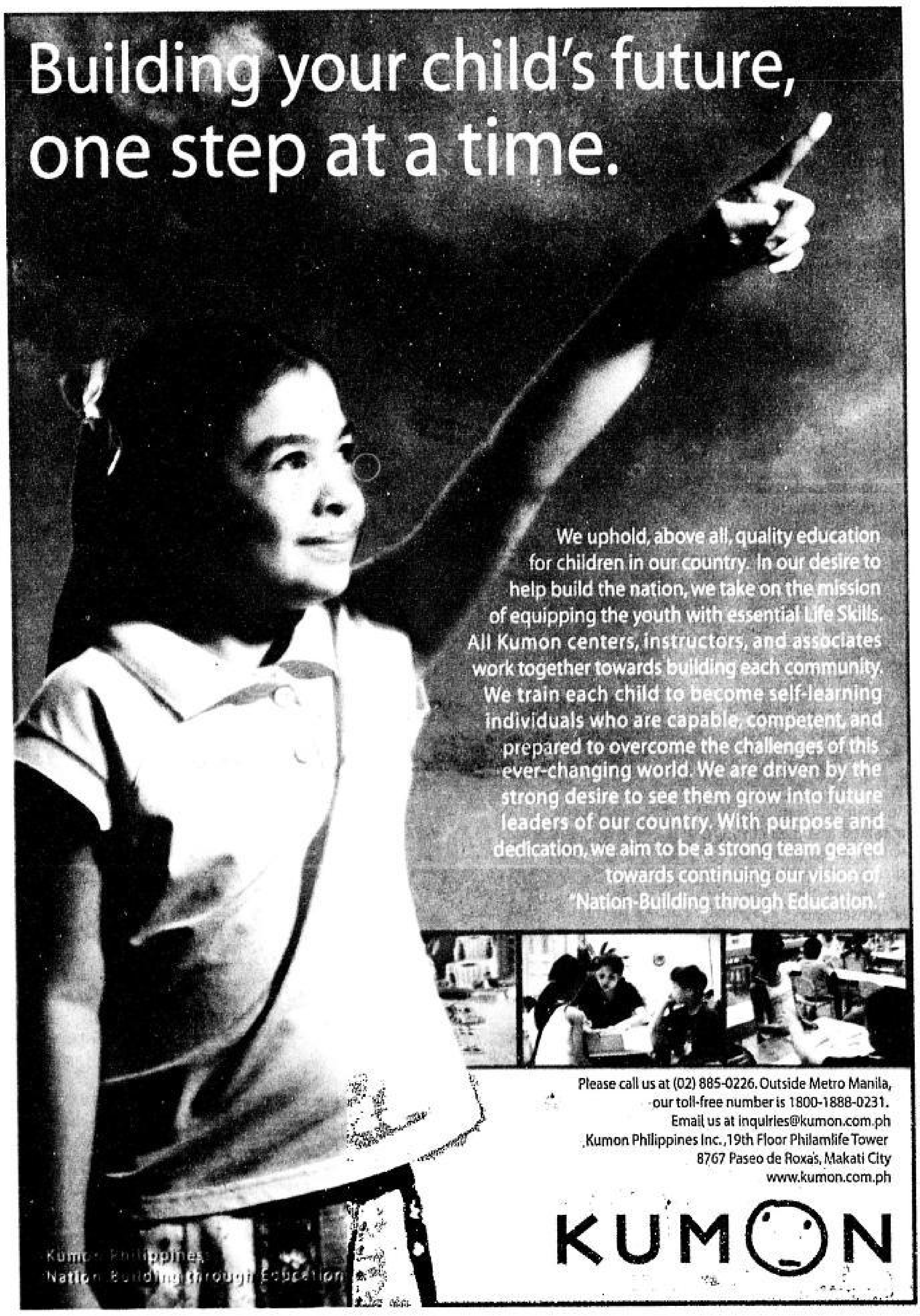
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**WHAT'S INSIDE**

**Giants tipped** to beat Beermen to first win /A30

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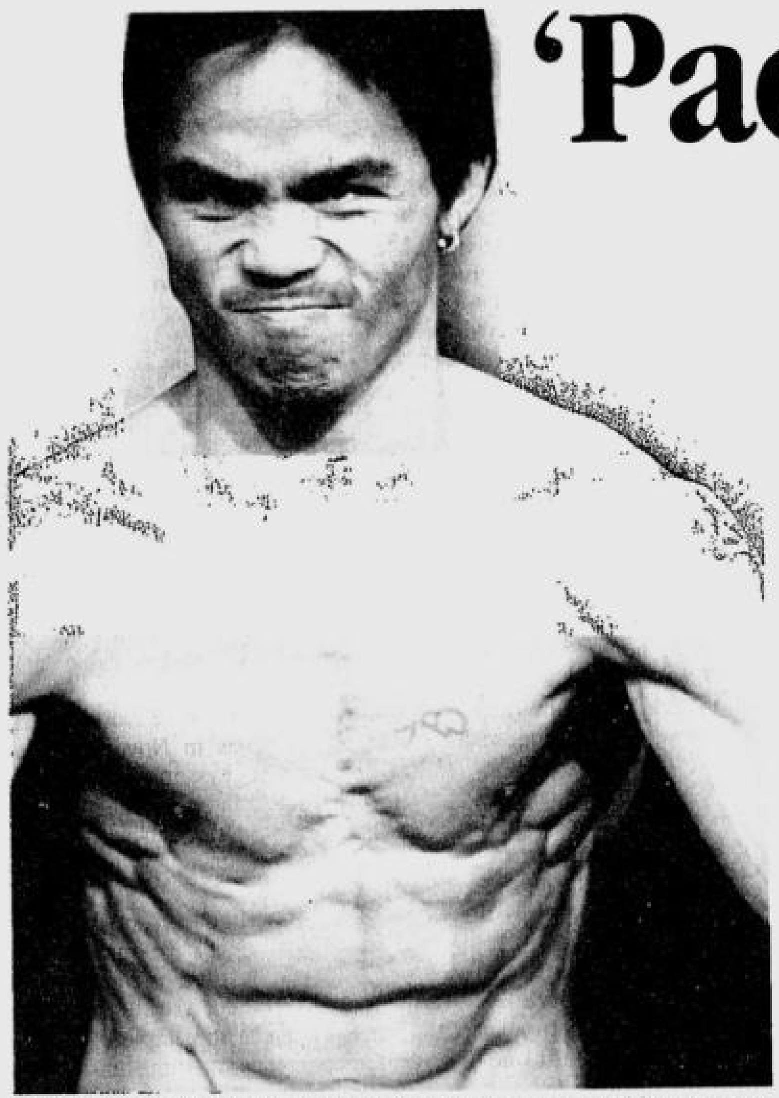
# 'Pacquiao too strong for Marquez or Barrera'



**SUGAR Shane Mosley thinks Manny Pacquiao can bring his power up to the 147-pound ranks.** PDI PHOTO

By Roy Luarca

IT TAKES A GREAT BOXER TO KNOW THE capabilities of another.

And three-time world champion and two-time Fighter of the Year Sugar Shane Mosley believes Manny Pacquiao has outgrown the 130-pound division.

Mosley, enshrined in the Boxing Hall of Fame in 2000, went as far as saying that "Manny can go up to 147 lbs with his power."

The opinion may be exaggerated, but it wasn't blurted out of the blue. It was a calculated observation from the only man to have beaten Mexican ring icon and Golden Boy Promotions top honcho Oscar De la Hoya twice.

The 35-year-old Mosley, who had seen Pacquiao in action many times, was also at ringside when Juan Manuel Marquez dethroned fellow Mexican great Marco Antonio Barrera Saturday evening in Las Vegas.

In a chance interview with Philboxing's Anthony 'Duljoman' Andales, Mosley went home convinced that a Marquez-Barrera rematch for the WBC super featherweight title is better than Pacquiao against either of the two.

The 35-year-old Mosley, now De la Hoya's chief business partner, reasoned out that Marquez and Barrera are evenly matched and that he felt the sellout crowd at the Mandalay Bay Arena "loved it (their fight)."

More than that, however, Mosley is convinced Pacquiao is just too strong for either Marquez, whom Pacquiao floored three times in the first round before rallying to forge a controversial draw in 2004, or Barrera, whom he stopped in the 11th round in 2003.

Marquez has said he is willing to give Barrera a "quick rematch," insinuating that he is also looking forward to slug it out with Pacquiao again.

This despite admitting to Andales that his fight with Pacquaio was "more difficult" than that against Barrera.

According to Andales, another heralded fighter, Bernard "The Executioner" Hopkins opined the Marquez-Barrera battle should be a pacesetter for Fight of the Year and that a rematch must be in order.

If that happens and Pacquiao wins over unbeaten Mexican Jorge "Coloradito" Solis on April 14 at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, then the Filipino is likely to find himself without a noteworthy super featherweight opponent.

In such a scenario, Pacquiao will be forced to let the Mexicans control the division. *With a report from Salven L. Lagumbay*

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# Pacman fight spots to sell for ₱2.5M

By Musong R. Castillo

GETTING YOUR PRODUCT A COMmercial spot in a Manny Pacquiao fight is going to give it quite an image boost. And bigger sales.

But it's going to cost you.

Solar Sports will sell 30-second spots for the Pacquiao-Jorge Solis fight on Apr. 14 in San Antonio for P2 to P2.5 million, an INQUIRER source revealed yesterday.

The steep price—which Solar executives stuck a lot of carrots into to make the package attractive—is for the sports network to have a chance at recouping the cost of mounting the coverage, which includes a whopping fee for the Filipino ring sensation.

The developments were among the highlights of the contract signing between telecommunications giant GMA 7 and Solar Sports yesterday at the Diamond Hotel. Officials from both networks refused to divulge how much Pacquiao will get from the deal.

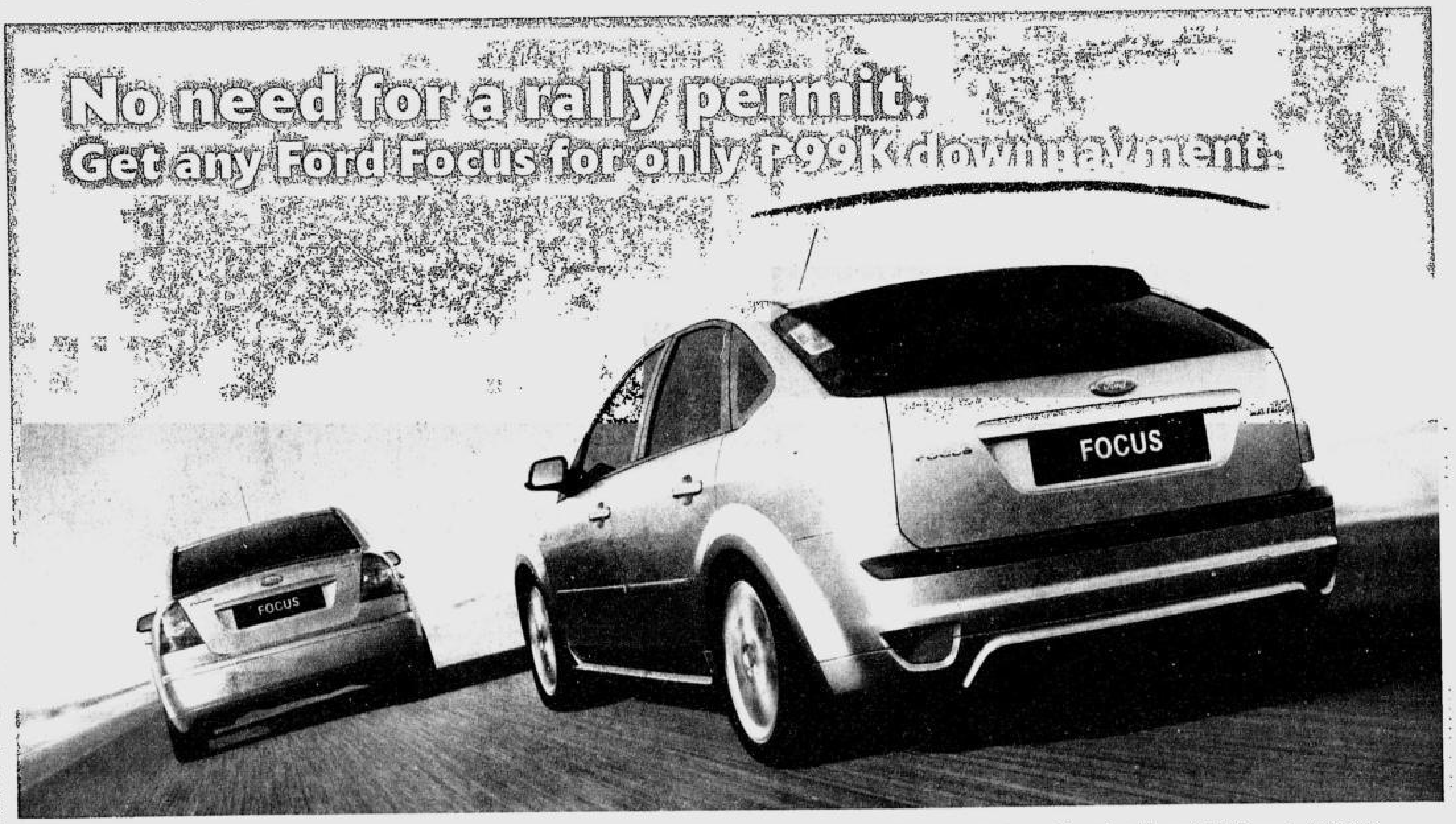
"Whatever amount has been published, $800,000 to $1.2 million, Manny deserves every penny of it," said Solar's Peter Chanliong.

Together with GMA 7's Gilberto Duavit, Jessica Sojo and Marissa Flores and Solar's Wilson Tieng and Jude Turcuato, Chanliong admitted that the fight would be aired on a slightly-delayed basis because of the many advertisements they anticipate.

The INQUIRER gathered the advertising rates from a very reliable source, who added that Solar was throwing in a lot of bonuses for those who will purchase spots, such as free or discounted rates for spots in Solar's other high-rating programs like the WWE, the NBA, and Ultimate Fighting Championship.

And depending on how long the bout ends—regardless of who's hand the referee raises—the same source said that breaks in-between rounds could reach up to as long as five minutes and as short as three to accommodate all the com-

PACQUIAO/A28



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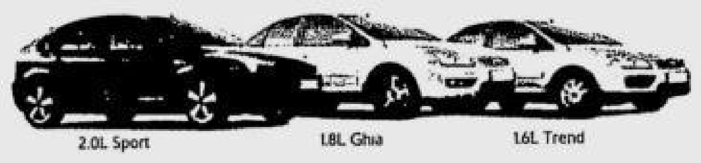

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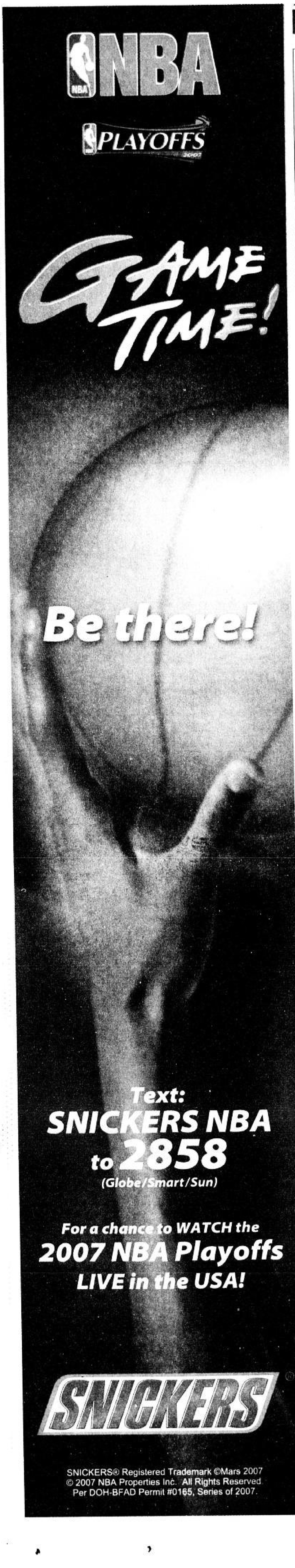
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# Spurned Pacquiao could shoot jellyfish in Macau

**BARE EYE**

*Recab Trinidad*

HE WAS SPURNED, SHELVED OR, TO PUT it plainly, put on the wait list.

Nobody does that to superhero Manny Pacquiao, a favorite of the President who flies first class, does and gets whatever he wants.

Pacquiao made noise, as usual, and called out the name of Juan Manuel Marquez who had just scored a classic victory over countryman Marco Antonio Barrera Sunday.

"Put him on," Pacquiao hollered.

There was no reply.

No, it was not a wrong number.

The line had been cut off.

* * *

Yes, there will be no immediate rematch for Pacquiao against Marquez, the gutsy ring craftsman, now officially Mexico's best fighter, who has sprung back to loom as the worthiest, most relevant challenge to Pacquiao's greatness.

Ronnie Nathanielsz reports: "Golden Boy Promotions' chief executive Richard Schaefer announced that pay-per-view network HBO had set a Sept. 16 date for a rematch between newly crowned super featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez and Marco Antonio Barrera from whom he won the title, leaving Manny Pacquiao out in the cold."

Of course, Pacquiao could come knocking again.

But like a desperate job applicant, Pacquiao has been made to go until he gets a call.

The message: "Don't call us, we'll call you."

* * *

How can that be?

Wasn't the Marquez-Barrera WBC title bout in Las Vegas over the weekend in essence an eliminator for the right to fight Pacquiao, the world's pound-for-pound king?

Yes, Pacquiao indeed is currently the hottest, most saleable boxing property out there in the square jungle.

Sorry, but that move by HBO and Golden Boy Promotions, which Pacquiao had earlier spurned by dishonoring a seven-fight contract with owner Oscar De La Hoya, sent the message that not all that sells in boxing is Pacquiao.

Call it karma or whatever, but Pacquiao has been put in his proper place.

* * *

Of course, a rematch between Pacquiao and Marquez, the warrior who taught the Filipino slugger that boxing was no one-way street, would be another bestseller.

However, sharp-eyed matchmakers with both Golden Boy and HBO were themselves quite amazed at the outcome of the Marquez-Barrera I, an instant candidate for Fight of the Year.

Ringside fans, on their feet through most of the 12-round contest, clamored for more as the warriors slammed it up at the final bell.

A second meeting between the two Mexican gladiators would send fans rushing to the fight site and shake the gates as they go *loco* over fierce action.

Continued Nathanielsz, a fight scholar who was an avid admirer of Pacquiao when the former poor boy from GenSan still knew what honor was all about: "While Golden Boy decided to leave Pacquiao out of its legal battle with Bob Arum for torturous interference in the contract they signed with the Pacman, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are disposed toward doing the Filipino champion any favors since, right now at least, they have the best fighters in their ranks with the most lucrative and exciting fights up ahead."

Aside from Marquez and Barrera, the report noted, Golden Boy also handles Joan Guzman and even undefeated knockout wonder boy Edwin Valero.

* * *

Meanwhile, out there in California, Pacquiao is scheduled for a Wednesday public preview with undefeated Jorge Solis (32-0) for their April 14 clash at the Alamodome in Texas.

Pacquiao, for one, has had to do some cramming in an obvious bid to make the Solis outing more interesting for ticket buyers and pay-per-view subscribers.

It's no secret how Pacquiao had looked past Solis, somewhat certain of an immediate rematch either against Marquez or Barrera.

Now, it's become clear there will be no such thing—at least within the year.

So where flies Pacquiao after his promised demolition of the tall, undefeated Solis?

He could go shoot jellyfish with Mr. Arum in Macau.

# Pacman fight spots to sell for ₱2.5M

From page A27

mercials.

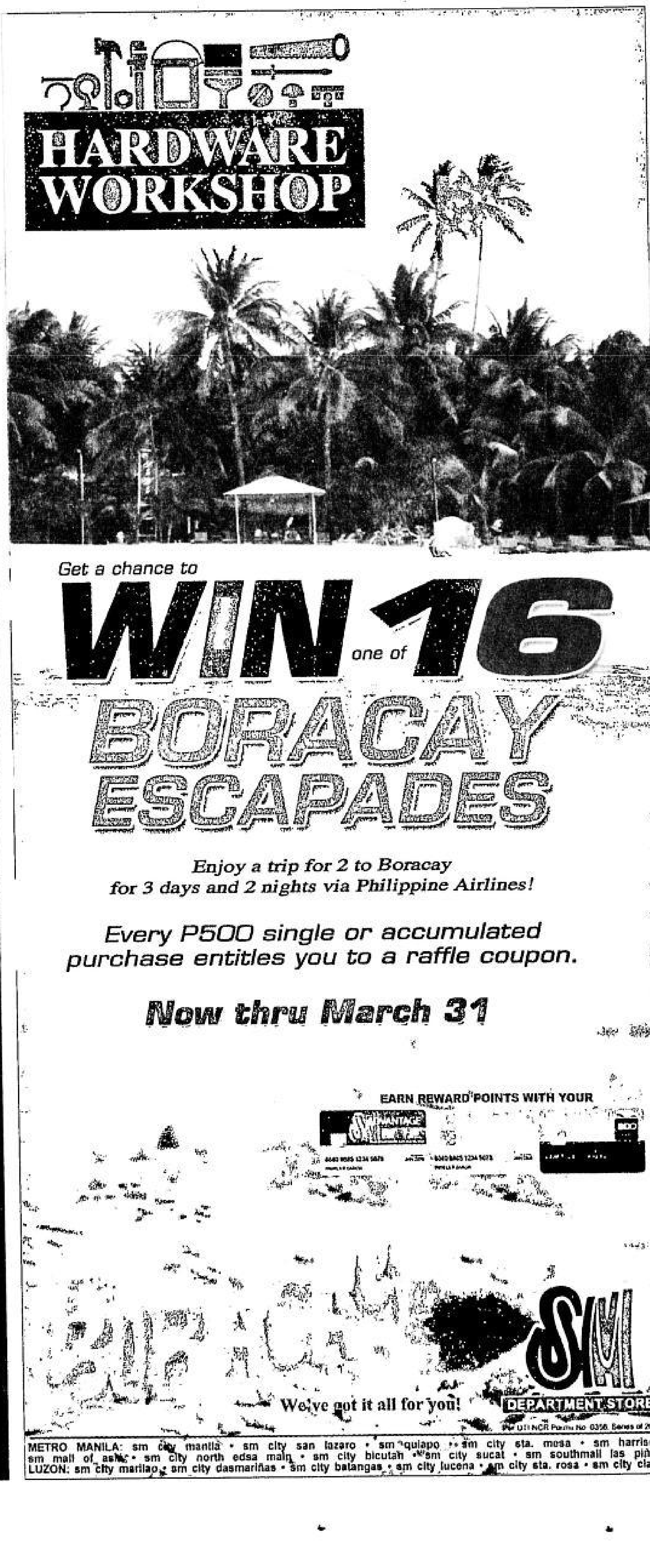
GMA 7 will be dabbling in a sports event of this magnitude for the first time since claiming the No. 1 spot in the ratings game.

The same source said that GMA 7 will earn practically nothing in this venture since Solar will be using its facilities solely "as the airing platform" of the fight and would be the one most exposed to losses, if any, after paying Pacquiao his fee.

"We are proud of this partnership and we hope to be able to have more in times to come," Duavit said.

The fight, which will be for Pacquiao's WBC International Super featherweight belt, will be telecast nationwide via GMA 7's strengthened network of originating stations and relay transmitters.

Pacquiao left Saturday night for Los Angeles, California, to continue training at Freddie Roach's Wild Card gym.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# Pagulayan top pick in BSCP Nat'l Pool tilt

IN FORM: Pagulayan

FILIPINO-CANADIAN cue artist Alex Pagulayan, fresh off his victory in the 17th Japan 9-Ball Open, defends his title in the 2nd BSCP National Pool Championships on March 26-31 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila.

Pagulayan, also the 2005 US Open champion and one of the top players of Puyat Sports, beat Taiwanese Ro-Li Wen (9-6) in the finals in Tokyo, Japan, to snare the top purse of 1.5 million yen and the championship trophy.

This was the first major title of Pagulayan, the 2004 World Pool champion, after a string of so-so performances dating back to last year. His last big win came at the 1st BSCP National Pool Championships in 2006.

Expected to challenge Pagulayan in the event presented by San Miguel Corp. are reigning double world champion Ronnie Alcano, 2006 World Pool League winner Dennis Orcollo, Antonio Gabica and Lee Vann Corteza.

Another favored entry is Warren Kiamco, winner in the 9-ball and 8-ball events of US Bar Table Championships in Nevada recently. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

# 5th Avenue, UP dribblers keep unbeaten slate

| STANDINGS | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| 5th Avenue | 4 | 0 |
| UP | 3 | 0 |
| CKP168 | 3 | 1 |
| P. Supertex | 2 | 1 |
| De Ocampo | 1 | 2 |
| EDC-Acsat | 1 | 3 |
| MLQU | 0 | 3 |
| Filcan Ice | 0 | 4 |

DEFENDING CHAMPion 5th Avenue and the UP Maroons went unbeaten in the first week of action in the 2007 MBT Alex Wang Cup at the RTU and Reyes gyms in Mandaluyong City.

The 5th Avenue squad of Mike Dullas swept their first four games while the Maroons of coach Joe Lipa strung up three straight victories in the MBT Open tourney.

The reigning champs hurdled MBT Corporate champion Pacific Supertex, 73-71, FilCan Ice, 89-83, MLQU, 83-68, and EDC Acsat, 90-67, while the Maroons defeated EDC- ACSAT, 85-81, FilCan Ice, 87-69, and De Ocampo, 85-64.

CKP168 and Pacific Supertex Kings closely trailed the leaders with a 3-1 slate and a 2-1 record, respectively.

Earlier, Mighty Filter Kings (Division C), EDC Caltex (E), CKP168 (F) and newcomer Transco (G) ruled their respective divisions.

Mike Mancilla of Division F runner-up Nougat-D scored records of 35 three-pointers and 107 points in a 144-89 win over Baron last March 10.

# PBA officials tasked with selecting SBP exec director

By June Navarro

THE SEARCH FOR THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE most pivotal post in the BAP-Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas hierarchy is now in full steam.

BAP-SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan has tasked Philippine Basketball Association officials to draft the qualifications for executive director who will run the day-to-day affairs of the new organization.

Pangilinan, main guest in yesterday's PSA Forum, asked PBA chair Ricky Vargas and commissioner Noli Eala to outline the guidelines for the coveted job and forward them to the nominations and membership committee chaired by San Miguel Corp. executive Ely Capacio.

"When I was in Hong Kong, I spoke with Noli Eala and Ricky (Vargas) about the progress being made," said the PLDT top honcho. "I told them to lay down the qualities of what the ideal executive director should be."

Several names have already cropped up for the post, including Junjun Capistrano, PLDT executive Al Panlilio and lawyer Chito Salud, son of former PBA commissioner Rudy Salud.

"There are already suggested names for consideration," said Pangilinan, who declined to identify the nominees.

Panlilio, who is based in Hong Kong, had already begged off due to the demands of his job.

"It's a job that needs total commitment," Panlilio said. "It will be difficult for me to perform my functions when I'm in Hong Kong."

With the guidelines in place, Capacio will be asked to create a short list of aspirants for the post, which the nomination and membership committee will present to the 25-man BAP-SBP board of trustees for approval.

"I hope we could find one soon," said Pangilinan. "I must confess, there's a lot of work to be done. He (executive director) will be in-charge of the day-to-day operations."

The telecoms magnate also shed light on the country's failure to snare the hosting of the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships to be held in Thailand on May 24-28.

"We tried mightily to hold the Seaba here," Pangilinan said. "I thought we had the chance but eventually Thailand got its act together."

HARBOUR CENTRE
Team Philippines - Harbour Centre Mission:

**FIGHTING UNDER A BANNER:** The RP squad with (from left, seated) Butch Maniego, coach Junel Baculi, Gil Angeles, Manuel Pangilinan, Mikee Romero and Ali Atienza.

RYAN LIM

# MVP: Defeat not an option for Harbour-RP in Seaba

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE MISSION STATEMENT HUNG OVER THEM.

Setting a clear team goal, Harbour Centre-Philippines had it printed on a white tarpaulin: "Bring back the glory for our country. Go for the Seaba gold."

The mandate came from BAP-Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas president Manny V. Pangilinan himself.

"Defeat is not an option," Pangilinan said in yesterday's PSA Forum. "We're quite excited since this is the first time we're competing again in an international tournament. It's very important to win the title."

Owning up to the challenge was Harbour Centre-Philippines coach Junel Baculi, who formed a star-studded but young 12-man roster for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Champions Cup set on April 9 to 13 in Jakarta.

The "small" lineup—which has an average height of 6-foot-2—is bannered by JC Intal, Jason Castro and Marvin Cruz and reinforced by 6-foot-8 former NBA backup center and PBA import Julius Nwosu. The team also listed four reserve players.

"When the coaching staff was evaluating the composition of the team, we came to the conclusion that what we lack is height," said Baculi. "So we're looking for an import who's 6-foot-8 or 6-9 and can rebound and defend. I hope we can get another one. If not, we'll make do with Nwosu."

Co-captains Al Magpayo and Chico Lanete, Jojo Duncil, Jeffrey Chan, Larry Rodriguez, Jonathan Fernandez, Erick Rodriguez and Beau Belga will also join the country's bid for its first title in two years.

On the reserve list are Doug Kramer, Ryan Araña, Patrick Cabahug and Chad Alonzo.

"It's mixed emotions for us," said team financier and Harbour Centre owner Mikee Romero. "There's the pressure of coming out for the first time and the whole 70 million Filipinos looking at you, expecting no less than the championship. It is a challenge—winning for the country, putting back the glory in Philippine basketball in the international arena. But we will take it. We have the best of the best amateurs."

The Jakarta club tournament, the qualifier for the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup, will be the Philippines' first regional stint since the Fiba (international basketball federation) lifted on Feb. 21 the country's suspension from international tournaments.

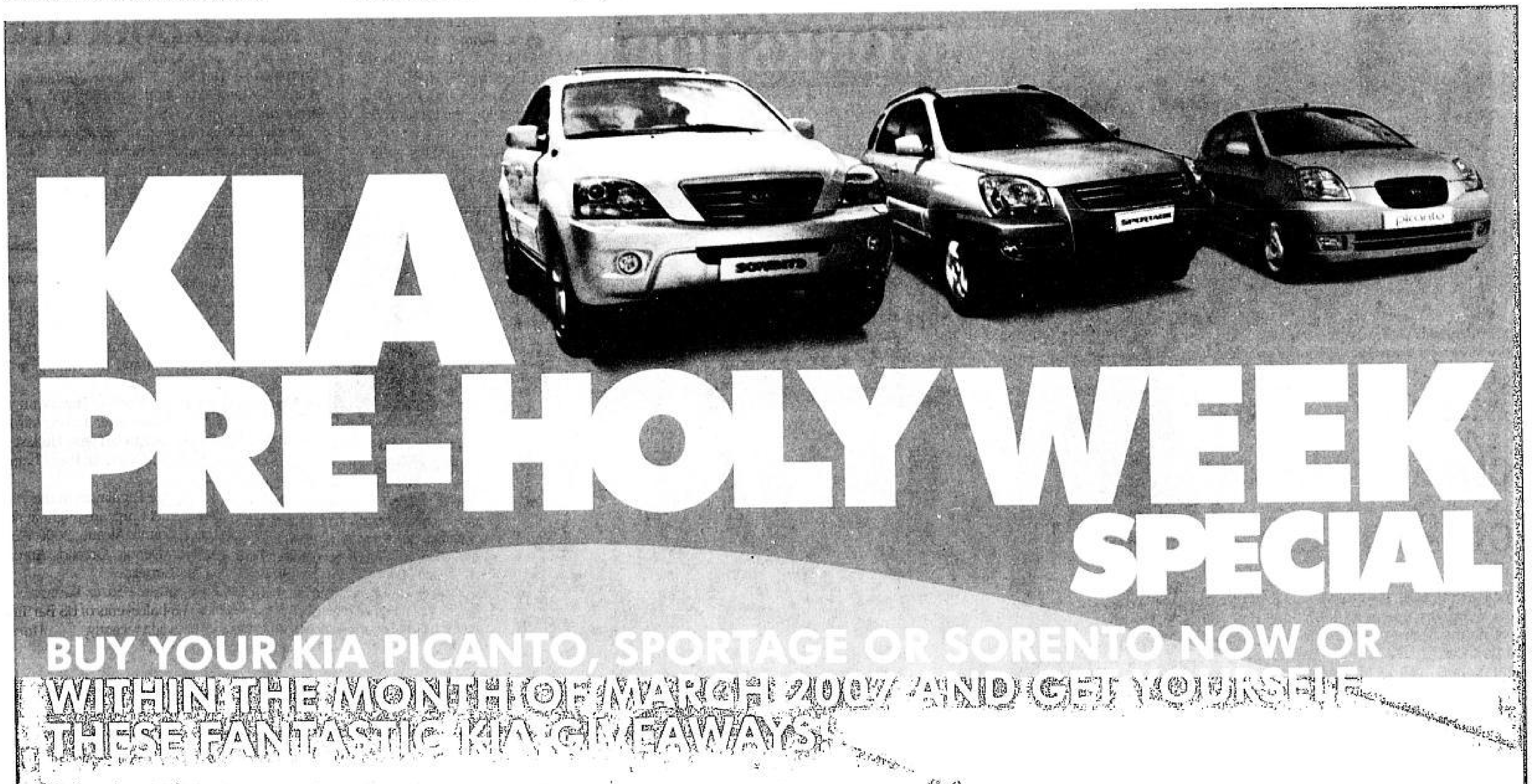
"We don't want a repeat of the lessons in the past when we sent a team we're not proud of," said PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad. "You won't be embarrassed with the team we're going to send."

Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent was designated as team consultant, while other members of the coaching staff include Hapee's Jun Noel, Burger King's Lawrence Chongson, Toyota Balintawak's Louie Alas, Magnolia's Koy Banal, Henkel Sista's Caloy Carcia and Cebuana Lhuillier's Luigi Trillo.

"We're very excited and delighted that the Philippines is back in the road map to win again what we had in the past," said PBL chair Gil Angeles.

Romero underscored the competitive nature that fuels the team's young players.

"They're very much motivated because for most of them, it's their first time (to represent the country)," noted Romero. "They'll give their all. These guys deserve to be here and they'll fight for the country."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# Sirikit Cup starts; Koreans faves

TAIWAN SEEKS A THIRD CONSECUTIVE CHAMPIONSHIP, POWERhouse South Korea guns for an Asian double and host Philippines hopes to end a streak of disappointing finishes in the 29th Asia-Pacific Invitational Golf Team Championship which starts today at The Country Club in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The Taiwanese trio of Lin Chi-tzu, Hsieh Ling-yu and Yeh Chen-ko will be going for just the third title "three-peat" in the history of the event, also known as Queen Sirikit Cup.

Australia first pulled off the feat from 1981 to 1983 and South Korea matched that with a string of its own from 1994 to 1996.

But the Taiwanese are expected to have their hands full against the Australians and the Koreans, who swept the team and individual gold medals in last year's Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

All eyes will be on Ryu So-yeon who won the Asiad individual gold. She teams up with Kim Soon-mi and Kim Sei-young as the Koreans seek to stamp its dominance anew against Asiad rivals Japan and Taiwan as well as Australia and New Zealand.

Some of the world's best amateur talents are in the field of 14 nations vying for the Sirikit trophy.

YUPAPORN: RP Ladies champ

ARDINA: Top Filipino bet

The Queen Sirikit Cup is being hosted by the Philippines for just the third time in 29 years. Japan, which is led this time by Asiad silver medalist Mika Miyazato, won both the 1987 and 1997 editions when the event was held here.

Preceding the hostilities was a pre-Sirikit golf game among officials, sponsors and guests and the traditional parade of colors at the TCC grounds yesterday.

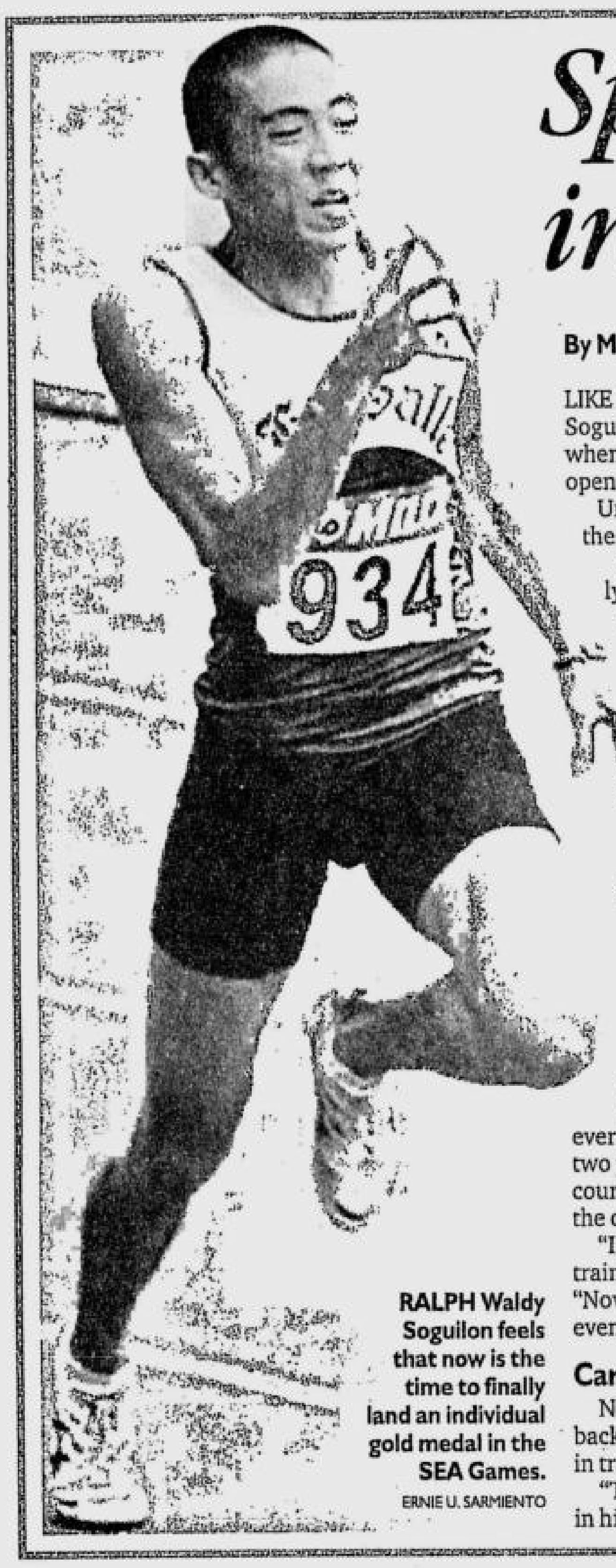
Also competing are Thailand which is bannered by reigning Philippine Ladies Open champion Yupaporn Kawinpakorn, Singapore, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, China, India and Indonesia.

The Philippines is fielding its youngest ever team with Dottie Ardina, Regina de Guzman and Crystal Superal out to improve on the team's struggling performances in recent years.

"We're up against the giants of ladies' golf, but who knows, our team might be able to defy the odds and give the country its first win in the tournament," said Gina Tuason, president of the organizing Women's Golf Association of the Philippines.

Ardina, the 13-year-old jungolfer touted as one of the region's future stars, will be playing for the second straight year. She will be contending with the same girls who beat her in the last RP Open, Yupaporn, Indonesian Lidya Ivana Jaya and Ainil Johani Abu Bakar of Malaysia.

South Korea is the winningest team in the Sirikit Cup with nine titles, one more than Australia's collection. Japan has six, New Zealand three and Taiwan two.


RALPH Waldy Soguilon feels that now is the time to finally land an individual gold medal in the SEA Games. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

# *Speedball Ralph runs in grander stage now*

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LIKE MOST FILIPINO TRACKSTERS, RALPH WALDY Soguilon's love affair with running began as a kid, when he used to dart across sprawling rice fields and open farmlands, chasing the wind.

Unlike most tracksters, though, Soguilon owned the fields.

His place in the economic spectrum isn't the only one that separates him from the country's top tracksters, who are normally province-bred athletes.

Soguilon is a licensed electronics and communications engineer from De La Salle University. And he has mestizo features.

The difference stops there.

## Not any different

"I'm not any different from them in terms of dedication to the sport," said Soguilon in a series of e-mails to the INQUIRER from California, where the 23-year-old is currently undergoing an intensive three-month training program.

The 5-foot-10½ Soguilon is sharpening his skills for the coming Southeast Asian Games in Thailand, and hopefully, the Beijing Olympics next year.

It would be the first Olympics for Soguilon if he ever makes the grade, and the third SEA Games. His two previous stints have so far yielded a silver medal courtesy of the 4 x 100 relay in the 2005 staging in the country.

"I got injured in late 2005 and only got back in training with just two months to go," said Soguilon. "Now I felt this is the time for me to win an individual event in the SEA Games."

## Career takes back seat

Now even his engineering career is taking the backseat as Soguilon attempts to go full steam ahead in track and field.

"That's why we, as his family, are supporting him in his decision," said his father, Waldemar who proved to be the biggest influence for his son being a sprinter for a bank he used to work for in Gen. Santos City.

SOGUILON: Proud to have a trackster dad. REM ZAMORA

The father is an agricultural engineer by profession who owns tracts of land and is also deeply into the sport, being the Region 12 director of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association.

"He can pursue whatever career he wants," added the father. "In fact, he already has job offers, but we want to realize how far can he go in track and field.

"Until he reaches his maximum potential, we will always be behind him."

## Breaking an old record

Just recently, during the Ben Brown invitationals in Mt. San Antonio College in California, Ralph broke the 22-year-old record of legend Isidro del Prado, posting 21.39 seconds in 200 meters to better the old mark of 21.44 established in December 1984.

The only son in the brood of three, Ralph first took up basketball in the province, playing center and forward positions.

"I told him that when he goes to Manila, he would be short for his position," said Waldemar.

Ralph took his father's advice and focused on track and field, earning full scholarship from La Salle which he gifted with several UAAP athletics championships. He was UAAP most valuable player twice and athlete of the year once, in the 2002-2003 season.

His current preoccupation keeps him from running in open meadows nowadays. But with his skills, Soguilon will have other fields to conquer.

# Top guns vying in DHL Nat'l Amateur golf April 10

BAYRON: Top pick

THE COUNTRY'S finest players vie for one of local amateur golf's biggest prizes in the DHL-WWWExpress National Amateur Golf Championship which gets going on April 10 at the north course of Canlubang Golf and Country Club in Laguna.

A wide-open race expected in both men's and ladies' play with reigning national champion Jay Bayron and Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bibat leading the chase for top honors in the 72-hole men's championship.

Last year's winner Marvin Dumandan has moved up to the pro ranks.

A tight battle for the ladies' crown also looms with defending champion Bambee dela Paz hard-pressed to keep her title in the presence of the young but talented members of the RP squad.

Junior World champions Dottie Ardina and Cyna Rodriguez, reigning national champion Carmelette Villaroman and Queen Sirikit campaigners Regine de Guzman and Crystal Superal are in the fold.

Registration is ongoing with deadline for submission of entries set at 12 noon on April 4. Entry fees are P2,500 for men and P2,000 for ladies.

The event is open to men and women amateur golfers with handicap indices of 0-7 (men) and 0-10 (women).

The ladies tournament, a 54-hole event, will start on April 11.

Joining the hunt for the men's crown are Anthony Fernando, Gene Bondoc, Miko Alejandro, Dante Becierra and Gino Bunyi and Canlubang mainstays Mark Fernando, Jonel Ababa, Dave Hernandez, Boyet Saragoza and Mario Labajo.

# Karter of Year chase rolls off on Saturday

THE HUNT FOR THE COVETED KARTER OF the Year plum begins as 2007 Shell Helix Superkarting Series stages its kickoff leg on Saturday, March 24 at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Bangkal, Cavite.

Carmona Mayor Dahlia Loyola will be the guest of honor and will be joined by Automobile Association Philippines executive director Mandy Eduque and Denso vice president Masanori Kono in the opening ceremonies at 11 am.

Some 70 karters are expected to participate in this event sanctioned by the AAP.

These karters will be vying for the titles in the centerpiece Formula Open 125. Rotax Max Seniors, Rotax Max Novice, Rotax Max Veteran, Formula SL class, Cadet 60 Novice, Mini ROK, ROK Junior Cup and the ROK Seniors.

The champions in the ROK Junior, Mini ROK and the ROK Seniors classes will again represent the country in the 2007 World ROK Championship in Lonato, Italy, in October.

Though focus will be on the brewing rivalry between reigning Karter of the Year Matteo Guidicelli and Asian Karting champ Marlon Stockinger, young talented kids are also set to grab their share of the limelight with their own brand of action in the Cadet 60 Novice, Mini ROK and ROK Junior Cup.

With Junior Karter of the Year Paco Rodriguez expected to move up to the Formula SL division, the ROK Junior Cup looms to be a tight battle among Jet Racing karters Javi Benitez and Vencer John Suba against Tuason Racing-Ready2Race Team top gun Juha Turalba.

The Mini ROK division, on the other hand, is expected to turn into a three-way battle among Renz Pazcoguin, Joey Orduna of Tuason Racing-Ready2Race Team, Jet Racing's Franco Reyes and Cebu Racing Group's Tonyo Carcel, last year's Cadet 60 second overall champion.

ACTION was intense in last year's championship leg in Boracay.

# Adamson, Benilde spikers open Nestea title defense

BEACH SPIKERS LED BY REIGNING CHAMPIONS Adamson University Falcons and the College of St. Benilde Lady Blazers vie for supremacy anew in the Nestea Beach 2007 Luzon eliminations which fires off today at the La Salle Green Hills sand court.

The three-day Luzon elimination will be followed by the Visayan stage on March 27 and 28 and the Mindanao segment on March 29 and 30. The grand finals will be played in Boracay from April 19 to 21.

All games are sanctioned by the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB).

Forty-eight teams from 34 colleges and universities from across the nation will join this year's edition of the exciting summer event, which draws the country's finest beach volley pairs.

Bigger cash prizes await the winners in both divisions. From P100,000 in 2006, the top prize has gone up to P150,000. Second placers get P75,000 and third placers P40,000. All Boracay qualifiers are also assured of cash prizes.

Speedo, Mikasa, Villa de Oro Boracay Beach Resort Hotel, Boracay Mandarin Island Hotel, Boracay Gold Crowne Club, Microtel Inns and Suites Boracay, Hey! Jude @ D' Mall, D' Mall D' Boracay, La Salle Green Hills, Schering Plough Coppertone and Crystal Sand are the event's sponsors.

"We're very thrilled to bring yet another series of heart-stopping beach volley action in this year's tournament," said Nestlé AVP and consumer marketing manager Tina Samaco. "We have very competitive teams raring to prove themselves worthy of the title."

Other competing schools from Luzon are La Salle-Dasmariñas, Far Eastern U, Letran, Lyceum, Philippine Christian University, St. Francis, St. Louis, San Sebastian, University of Baguio, University of the Cordilleras, University of Luzon and UP.

*With a report from June Navarro*

# SPORTSWATCH

## Badminton tour's Bacolod leg lures 400 pairs

OVER 400 PAIRS SHOWED UP FOR THE LEVELING PHASE OF THE BAcolod regional tournament of the Yonex-Sunrise Badminton Tour over the weekend at the Shuttler's Haven Badminton Courts in Bacolod City. Organizing committee chair and national coach Errol Chan said that participants as young as nine made the grade in five levels for boys and girls doubles, singles and mixed doubles and open class events. The main draw is set March 30-31 and April 1. "This only proves how popular badminton is today, particularly in the provinces," said Chan, also chair of Badminton Association of the Philippines' grassroots sports program. "The urge to play and be tapped for the national pool is evident here." Chan said he expects the tournament to be well-fought, just like in the badminton tour's previous legs in Kidapawan City, Cebu City and Pampanga.

## 80 fights today in SJC 'National Rambulan'

COMPETITION RESUMES TODAY AT THE SAN JUAN COLISEUM IN THE "National Rambulan" 8-cock derby, an inter-cockpit event sponsored by Thunderbird Platinum that stakes P10.5 million for the winners. A total of 217 entries registered for the SJC event, according to hosts Rodolfo Pineda and Butch Nunez. The last batch of 80 participants will see action in today's 2-cock eliminations, with the 3-cock semifinals slated Saturday. About 800 entries are expected in the nationwide derby. Eliminations in the Visayas and Mindanao will start in the last week of March and in the first week of April. Meanwhile, the "Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan" on March 30 at the SJC offers P500,000 in guaranteed prize for an entry fee of P2,200.

## Big field expected in Roligon derby

THE NEW COCKFIGHT FORMAT CALLED "SMALLTIME BATTLE OF CHAMpions" 3-cock derby resumes on March 23, 24 and 25 at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. The series, with P500,000 in guaranteed prize at stake, began last Saturday and Sunday and drew a total of 110 entries. Participants may join the no-entry-fee one-cock "ulutan" elimination rounds. Bonus prizes are up for grabs with the first 30 winners getting P1,000 each; 31st to 60th winners, P800 each and 61st to last-place winners, P600. Those who will score a point will, for an entry fee of P2,500, then compete in the 2-cock "timbangan" championship round on April 7. The fastest-win champion, based on the entry's last fight, will get P50,000 while the second placer wins P20,000.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

**Race 1**—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Happy Again/Kalashnikov (7), El Cid (9), Kawiliwili (5), Top Quest (3), Red Anya (1)

**Race 2**—Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Powerhead (10), Even Storm (8), Miata (12), Mine of Gold (9), Mr Chingbol (5)

**Race 3**—(Qrt/Tri)— Cara Dura (2), Vantage (1), True Account (5), Full of Fury (6)

**Race 4**—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)— Spinning Bullet (1), Friendly Venture (2), Odyssey (9), Maximum Impact (8), Manila's Smile (4)

**Race 5**—Karma (2), Vitality (9), Alyssa's Choice (8), Flynow (5), Dato's Pride (3)

**Race 6**—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Red Hot Water (6), Manila's Slew (8), Naglalabyog (4), Blitzkreig (2), West N Wild (7)

**Race 7**—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—El Terrible (9), T-Mac (2), Storm (5), Treasured Ack (10), Sophia's Fortune (8)

**Race 8**—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Dashing (5), Cool Cielo (6), Mas Que Nada (1), Top of D'Line (7), Scarab (4), Power Negotator (14)

# Hawks rout Kings, stretch streak

**ATLANTA—THE STRUGGLING ATLANTA Hawks won their fifth consecutive home game for the first time in four years on Monday, strolling to a 99-76 victory over the Sacramento Kings.**

Sacramento had beaten Atlanta seven straight times dating back to January 2003, but the Hawks snapped that streak with a dominant third quarter where they held the Kings to eight points.

"I thought from beginning to end that we were so focused," Atlanta coach Mike Woodson told reporters.

"Our defense was as good as it's been all year."

Atlanta led 53-42 at the half and played with an energy that has been missing for most of the second half of the season. After a strong start, the Hawks have fallen to 27-41—4 1/2 games out of the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

The Hawks scored 25 points in the third quarter to open up a 28-point lead before coasting to their most lopsided win of the season.

Josh Childress scored a season high 25 points and Zaza Pachulia added 23 points for the Hawks.

Corliss Williamson led the Kings with 14 points.

"The Hawks played with great energy tonight," Kings coach Eric Musselman said. "They did a good job in transition."

The Kings have lost six of seven after a four-game winning streak to slip to 29-38, now 2 1/2 games out of the final playoff spot in the Western Conference.

At Oklahoma City, Tyson Chandler scored 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and the Hornets bounced back after Boston's quick start to score a 106-88 victory.

The Celtics couldn't miss at the start, but then had only nine points in the second quarter—their lowest total in a quarter this season—as the Hornets took control. *Reuters, AP*

## NBA STANDINGS

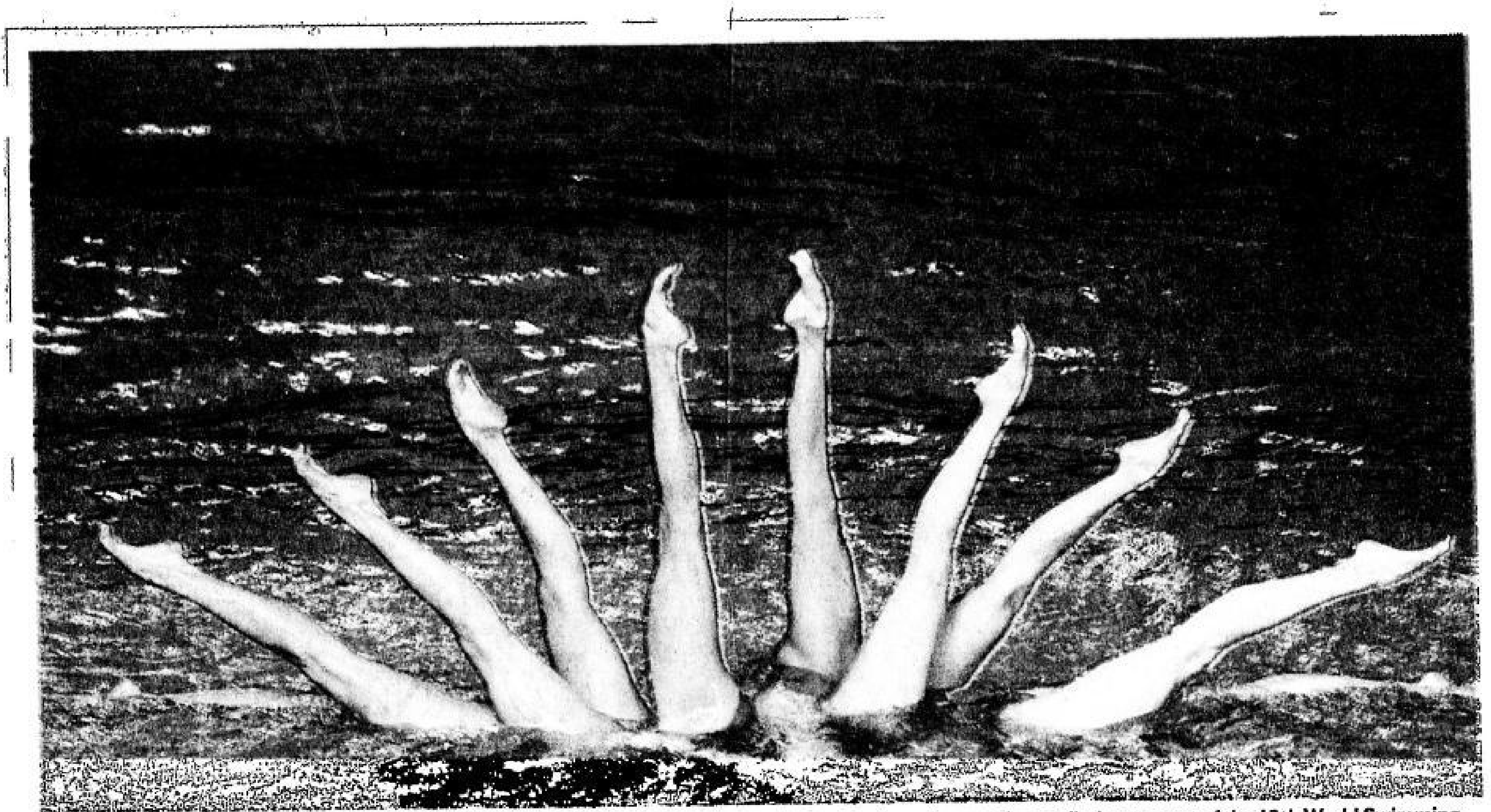
### EASTERN CONFERENCE

| ATLANTIC DIVISION | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Toronto | 36 | 31 |
| New Jersey | 31 | 36 |
| NY Knicks | 30 | 36 |
| Philadelphia | 26 | 41 |
| Boston | 20 | 47 |
| **CENTRAL DIVISION** | **W** | **L** |
| Detroit | 42 | 23 |
| Cleveland | 41 | 25 |
| Chicago | 39 | 29 |
| Indiana | 30 | 35 |
| Milwaukee | 25 | 41 |
| **SOUTHEAST DIVISION** | **W** | **L** |
| Washington | 36 | 28 |
| Miami | 36 | 30 |
| Orlando | 31 | 37 |
| Atlanta | 27 | 41 |
| Charlotte | 24 | 43 |

### WESTERN CONFERENCE

| NORTHWEST DIVISION | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Utah | 43 | 23 |
| Denver | 33 | 31 |
| Minnesota | 28 | 37 |
| Seattle | 26 | 40 |
| Portland | 26 | 40 |
| **PACIFIC DIVISION** | **W** | **L** |
| Phoenix | 50 | 16 |
| LA Lakers | 35 | 32 |
| Golden State | 32 | 36 |
| LA Clippers | 30 | 36 |
| Sacramento | 29 | 38 |
| **SOUTHEAST DIVISION** | **W** | **L** |
| Dallas | 54 | 11 |
| San Antonio | 46 | 20 |
| Houston | 42 | 25 |
| N.O. Oklahoma | 30 | 37 |
| Memphis | 17 | 50 |

DATA: REUTERS
INQGRAPHICS: LOUIE BACANI



**CHINESE** synchronized swimmers perform at the Susie O'Neill pool in Melbourne during the team free routine preliminary event of the 12th World Swimming Championships. Chinese athletes are among the favorites in this aquatics event, especially in diving. AFP

# Jellyfish turn open swimmers into babies

MELBOURNE—THE SCREAMS OF THE open water swimmers at the world championships could be heard if you listened closely Tuesday.

The hardy athletes know the risks they take when they plunge in the ocean but even the best in the business said the world title race here was the toughest they had ever encountered.

Light rain, choppy seas and a bunched field meant the 10km slog in Port Philip Bay was never was going to be easy, but it was the jellyfish that wrought havoc.

Everyone got bitten, and it wasn't a pleasant experience with several women dragging themselves from the water in tears.

Russia's Larisa Ilchenko won the race by just one second from Britain's Cassandra Patten with Australia's Kate Brookes-Petersen half a second further back.

"In the 5km nothing worried me, the conditions were perfect. Today, I could hear the girls behind me screaming in the first lap," said Ilchenko.

"I expected it to be the same as the 5km, instead we're all walking around with spotty red faces.

"This medal was harder for me than any other in my life.

"I didn't plan anything. I just tried to finish. Of course, I wanted to win, but in those moments—just to finish. There was nothing in my head. I wasn't thinking."

The race was so tough that Ilchenko suggested she may dump it and stay only with the 5km, which she won on Sunday.

"I like the process, and just like the sport. If it remained a non-Olympic event, I'd keep doing it, though maybe not the 10km, just the five. That was my first event anyway."

Some swimmers said their arms were paralyzed by the bites and Patten said it was a race to remember for all the wrong reasons.

"It's been a really tough race for everyone, I'm sure," she said.

"Everyone had stings on their face and arms. Where didn't I get stung to be honest? My face, my legs, in my costume. The only place I didn't get stung was probably the bottom of my feet.

"You don't really see them coming through, you just feel them. At least it wasn't sharks!"

An exhausted Patten said she had never been stung by jellyfish before and she would celebrate her medal by going to sleep.

"I think I am going to celebrate by having an early night. You come out of the race completely drained, you just want food, water and want to sleep."

Local hero Brookes-Petersen took the bronze and should be used to the local sea life in Australia, but even she was reeling from the jellyfish assault.

"Open water swimming is a rough sport, and the course was really tough today because the water was full of jellyfish," she said.

"It was a tough race for everyone. Everyone had stings on their face and body.

"It was the toughest swim I have ever done. In the last laps I felt my energy dropping."

Several competitors also complained about the physical nature of the race, with goggles being ripped off and swimmers held back.

"Everyone was just beating each other up. I have never experienced such a race before. It was horrible," said Germany's Angela Maurer.

But hard-nosed Kalyn Keller of the United States had little sympathy for those complaining, particularly the tearful women.

"I was just so surprised, they are such babies," she said. "It was rough, but that was to be expected." *AFP*

# Nadal zeroes in on more 'Slams'

INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA—NOW that he's had his first taste of victory in nine months, Rafael Nadal says his focus is on winning more Grand Slams and not worrying about the rankings.

Speaking after winning his first ATP title in 13 tournaments and initial victory of 2007, Nadal said Sunday he has a long way to go to catch Swiss superstar Roger Federer.

"Right now Roger is not my competition because Roger is the best in history," Nadal said.

"I am No. 2 and Roger is No. 1 and far ahead of all the others.

"My goal is to continue winning tournaments and remain in the top rankings but maybe the No 1 is very, very difficult. I am not thinking about that.

"If I play like this I can win another major."

After defending his French Open title in June, Nadal hit a rough patch and didn't win another title until Sunday's 6-2, 7-5 victory over Serb Novak Djokovic at the ATP Indian Wells Masters Series tournament.

The left handed Spaniard lost to Fernando Gonzelez in the quarterfinals at the Australian Open earlier this year. At an Indian Wells tune-up event in Doha he was beaten in the quarters by Mikhail Youzhny of Russia.

Prior to Indian Wells, his best result of 2007 was making the semifinals in his first tournament in Chennai.

Nadal has 18 career singles titles and two Grand Slams and when he was the same age, Federer had won three ATP titles.

Looking at the age comparison some might think the soft spoken Spaniard has modest goals but Nadal says if he continues to improve the titles fall into place.

"My goal is to continue to have titles like this one and try to win another Grand Slam," Nadal said. *AFP*

**HEAD TURNER:** Callaway's FT-i square driver

**NEW PRODUCTS**

# Square driver, other clubs up for scrutiny

THE CALLAWAY GOLF SQUARE DRIVER AND many other new sticks and balls coming from the factory of the world's biggest clubmaker will be up for scrutiny at the Callaway Product Launch this Friday at the Wack Wack driving range in Mandaluyong City.

Lined up for the product launch are the new square driver, or the FT-i and the FT-5 driver, the X-20 irons, the X fairway wood, X hybrids, X Forged irons and X Tour wedges as well as the HX Tour and HX Tour 56 balls.

Two top executives of Callaway are set to arrive for the big party, which is also part of the 25th anniversary celebration of Callaway and its Philippine distributor, Electrobus Consolidated Inc.

They are Warren Lee, sales and marketing manager for Asia, and Sam Sheagren, director for international sales.

Electrobus, headed by its president Antonio Herrera Jr., is marking the occasion with a series of activities which will be highlighted by a fashion show and cocktails at the Wack Wack ballroom.

Electrobus has also invited officials of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, the Federation of Philippine Golf Clubs and various golf organizations as well as prominent golfers in the business community to the affair.

"We hope to see all the people who have contributed to the growth of Callaway as one of the biggest golf brands in the country," said Herrera.

A dealers' seminar will be held at 1 p.m. and free hitting will be opened from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the driving range. Cocktails will be held and 25 top-of-the line Callaway products will be raffled off to lucky guests.

# Fan attack shocks Lampard

**A FAN** goes after Chelsea's Frank Lampard after the final whistle. AP

LONDON—FRANK LAMPARD REvealed his horror at being attacked by a Tottenham fan as he celebrated Chelsea's 2-1 FA Cup quarterfinal replay win.

Lampard was savoring the triumph with his teammates in front of the Chelsea supporters at White Hart Lane on Monday when two Spurs ran onto the pitch to confront him.

One of them got close enough to throw a punch at Lampard, but he failed to make contact with the England midfielder. Stewards eventually dragged the fans away as Blues boss Jose Mourinho and his coaching staff intervened.

Lampard, who had thrown his shirt to Chelsea's fans, insisted he was within his rights to celebrate and said: "I saw the guy coming and just ducked. He should never have been on pitch. There is a lot of emotion in this game, but we should be able to celebrate with our own fans.

"It's not fair. Their fans gave us stick for the whole game and then complain when we celebrate. The feeling had built up from the first game and that showed."

Mourinho warned Tottenham's security staff that they must be more alert in future to avoid a repeat. *AFP*

# Champ relives 'Rumble' vs Foreman at Ali Center

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY—THE CHANT began before the eighth round flickered onto the screen, an echo from a day long past.

"Ali bomaye! Ali bomaye!"

Muhammad Ali shook slightly as the chant—which means "Ali! Kill him!"—washed over him. He looked up from his seat and smiled.

The Champ was at the Muhammad Ali Center on Sunday, joined by several witnesses to the "The Rumble in the Jungle." They watched a film of the famed bout and told old stories about what some consider Ali's finest hour in the ring, when he chopped down mighty George Foreman with the "Rope A Dope" strategy and took back the heavyweight boxing championship on Oct. 30, 1974.

There was Angelo Dundee, the legendary trainer who never doubted that Ali, at 32, could handle the hard-hitting and hard-charging 25-year-old Foreman, the one who many experts predicted would destroy the former champion.

There was Leon Gast, director of the Academy Award-winning documentary "When We Were Kings," who can remember the heat and the crowds of people who flocked to see Ali.

There was Howard Bingham, Ali's personal photographer, wincing when recalling the punishment Ali took early in the bout as Foreman pushed Ali into the ropes and attacked with the right hand that had knocked out 38 of his previous 40 opponents.

And there was Foreman, laughing as he talked about the supposed quick 10-count by the referee that ended his first reign as heavyweight champion.

"In that fight, Muhammad beat me," Foreman said. "If I'd gotten up, he would have killed me."

But mostly, there was Ali, holding court as only he can.

Even now, at 65 and his body worn down from a long battle against Parkinson's disease, Ali delighted the crowd of 175 that traveled from points across the world to meet the man who became one of the most recognized faces in the world.

Ali posed for pictures, signed autographs and even did a little conducting when the crowd hailed him with a belated rendition of "Happy Birthday," holding his left hand for just a second to extend the final note.

"This is just what we envisioned for this center," said his wife, Lonnie. "For people to be able to experience this when he's still here with us, not when he was gone." *AP*

SPORTS

JAMES Yap (right), Purefoods' steadiest local, tries to stop Sta. Lucia's Nelbert Omolon during a recent game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

# Giants tipped to beat Beermen to first win

**DONDON HONTIVEROS, THE SAN MIGUEL** Beer swingman who is on loan to the National team, went up to Kerby Raymundo during practice on Monday to say something.

"It's the 'championship game' on Wednesday (today) between our mother teams," Hontiveros told Raymundo with a wry smile before rejoining the motion-offense drills.

But it seems that Raymundo, Purefoods' contribution to the RP squad, will have the last laugh when the Beermen and the Tender Juicy Giants slug it out for a first win in the PBA Fiesta Cup eliminations at 7:20 tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

Alaska, meanwhile, shoots for a share of second place when it tangles with dangerous Welcoat in the 4:35 p.m. game. The Aces are smarting from a 124-113 overtime defeat to Red Bull on Thursday, their first setback in three outings.

Hontiveros did not know it then, but the Giants have activated Marquin Chandler for tonight and his arrival will definitely make Purefoods the logical choice over a similarly struggling San Miguel Beer side.

| STANDINGS | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Air21 | 3 | 0 |
| Red Bull | 3 | 1 |
| Coca-Cola | 3 | 1 |
| Alaska | 2 | 1 |
| Ginebra | 2 | 1 |
| Sta. Lucia | 1 | 2 |
| Welcoat | 1 | 2 |
| Talk 'N Text | 1 | 2 |
| Purefoods | 0 | 3 |
| San Miguel | 0 | 3 |

**GAMES TODAY**
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Welcoat vs. Alaska
7:20 p.m.—Purefoods vs. San Miguel Beer

"I have no choice," coach Ryan Gregorio told the INQUIRER Monday night. "We need to play Marquin now and take a chance, or risk being left too far behind (in the standings)."

Things have turned so sour for the Beermen that Siot Tanquingcen will take over the head coaching job from Biboy Ravanes starting today. Up until last week, Tanquingcen served as Jong Uichico's assistant at Barangay Ginebra.

Last year's Best Import, Chandler averaged 25 points and 13 rebounds. He replaces Jesse King. Purefoods and San Miguel Beer are in the bottom of the standings with 0-3 slates, something which could be understandable in Gregorio's case—his starting lineup sat behind the bench in the last three games due to injuries.

"There are times when I would just like to tap someone coming from ringside," Gregorio said with a laugh. "Hopefully, with Marquin there, we could plug as many as three holes for the team."

Aside from Raymundo, Marc Pingris, Jun Limpot and Rogey Yap have been out due to various injuries. Explosive swingman Peter June Simon is also playing on borrowed time because of a bad back.

"Every time I look behind my bench and see those (injured) players, I just can't help but wonder what if they were healthy," Gregorio added. "But this is a different challenge. Winning with a depleted lineup would make it sweeter."

James Yap has been left to carry the offensive burden for the Giants in their first three games.

A troubled marriage notwithstanding, the 6-foot-3 gunslinger is the most prolific local in the tournament with more than 27 points a game.

San Miguel Beer will have to get something out of import Paul McMillan to score that first win. The locals, too, must step up.

The Beermen have lost by big margins because none of the locals were able to play and contribute on a consistent basis. *Musong R. Castillo*

# Tough Lancer net draws for Dy, Dandan

HEWITT

LOCAL JUNIOR tennis stars Kyle Joshua Dandan and Denise Dy are out to end the country's 10-year drought in the Mitsubishi-Lancer International Juniors Tennis Championships slated March 26 to April 1 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Dandan and Dy hope to duplicate the 1997 feat of Maricris Fernandez, the last Filipino to rule the tournament.

Dy, however, will be up against New Zealand's Sacha Jones, ranked 12th in the world in the girls' division, while Dandan is entered in a tough field that includes world No, 20 Peng Hsien-ying Peng of Taiwan.

Among the prominent past champions of the tournament are Indonesians Benny Wijaya (1990) and Mahesh Bhupathi (91-92), former world Mo. 1 Lleyton Hewitt (1997) and Danai Udomchoke of Thailand (1998).

The qualifying tournament will be on March 25 with the main draw for the 23-nation tournament set on March 27.

"The tournament has a tradition of being a breeding ground for future world champions, so it's not easy to win this tournament," tournament director Ajay Pathak told yesterday's PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila.

Philippine Tennis Association executive vice president Lito Villanueva, Mitsubishi representative Arlan Reyes and RP coaching staff Chris Cuarto also graced the public sports program sponsored by Pagcor, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Manila Sports Council chief Arnold "Ali" Atienza.

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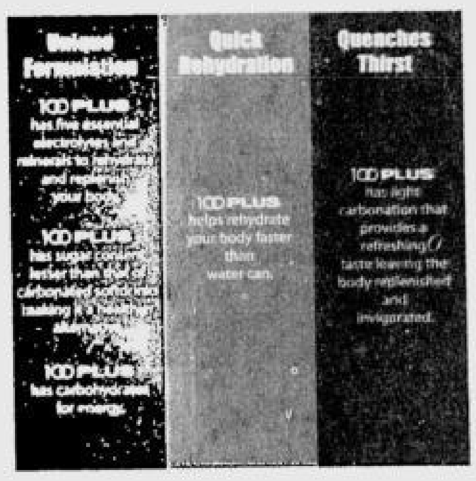
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# RP urged to liberalize cement industry

**INDICATORS**

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P48.585 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 20, 2007

## World Bank says 'oligopoly' curtailing competition

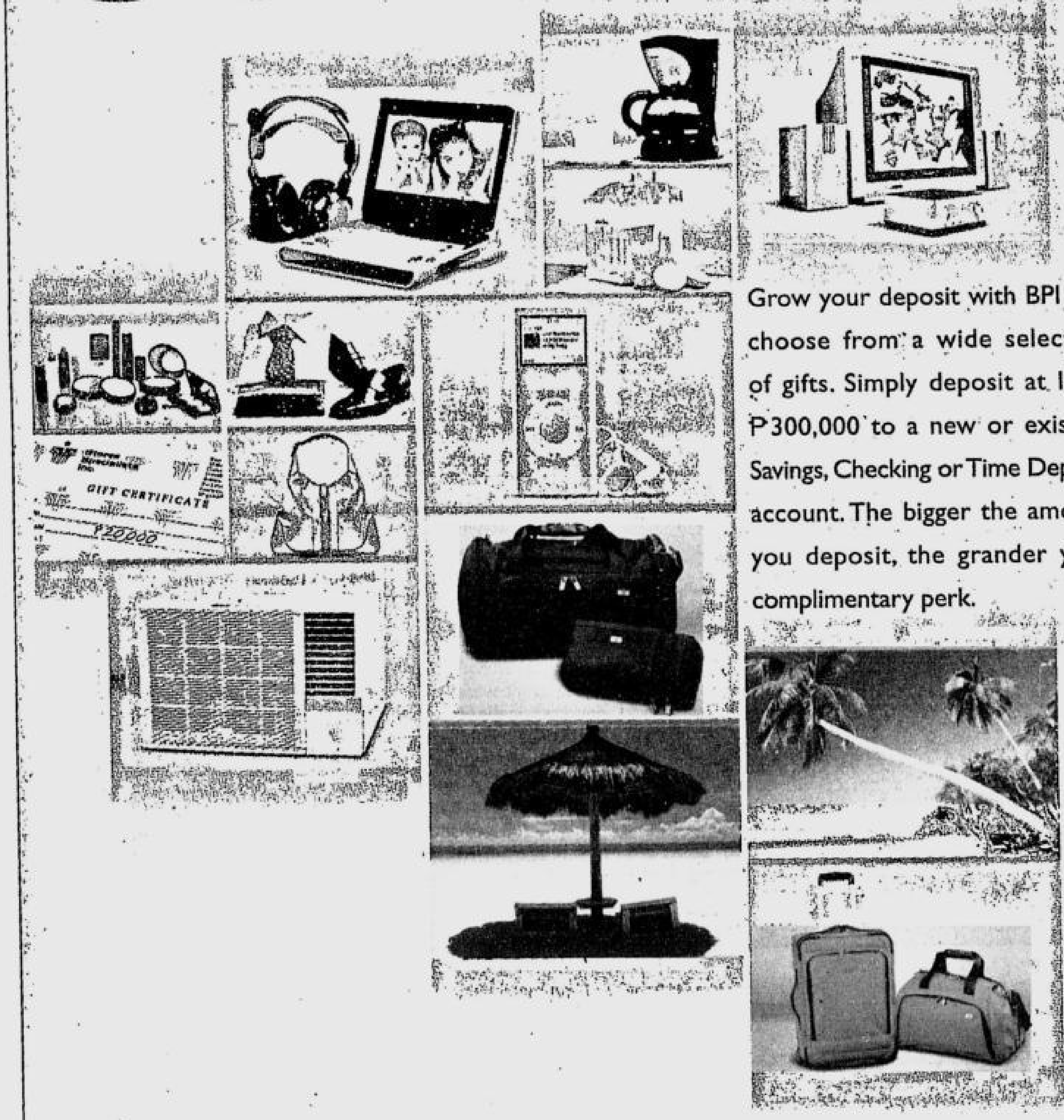
**By Doris C. Dumlao**

THE WORLD BANK HAS URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO liberalize what it termed as an "oligopolistic" Philippine cement sector so that more funds could be spent on public infrastructure without putting at risk the target to wipe out the budget deficit.

In its latest country report, the World Bank noted that local prices of cement—a key input in fixed investments across a wide range of economic sectors especially in infrastructure and housing—were among the highest in Asia.

"Bringing down cement prices to levels comparable with other countries in

RP URGED/ B3



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# ₱700-M biofuels project OKd

## Company to use sugarcane juice or molasses as feedstock

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**

A NEW INVESTOR IS ADDED TO THE STILL short but lengthening list of biofuels enterprises even as the implementation of the Biofuels law is facing delay.

According to the Board of Investments, it had approved the granting of incentives to all-Filipino firm Biofuels 88 Corp. for its P700-million project.

The Quezon City-based company plans to build a facility in Mariveles, Bataan to produce bioethanol from molasses.

Bioethanol is used as a blend to produce gasoline that burns with less greenhouse gas emission.

The project, which is expected to create 40 new jobs when it starts operating commercially in July 2009, will be able to produce 19.8 million liters of bioethanol yearly.

In its application with the BOI, Biofuels 88 had asked to be registered with a pioneer status. The agency, however, granted the project a preliminary non-pioneer status without prejudice for an upgrade.

The BOI said the company must establish first that its project would indeed use "new and clean technology" as required under the specific guidelines of the Investment Priorities Plan, the government's list of preferred industries.

Pioneer status affords companies a tax holiday of up to six years compared to only four years for non-pioneering projects.

All BOI-registered projects enjoy duty-free privilege on the importation of capital goods, as well as other fiscal and non-fiscal perks.

Biofuels 88 plans to finance 30 percent of the project cost with equity and the balance, with loans.

Aside from manufacturing ethanol, the planned Bataan facility would be involved in the marketing, trading, selling and distribution of the product.

The facility's output is intended to serve the supply needs of independent fuel companies, such as Flying V, Filpride, Filoil, Eastern Petroleum, Seaoil Petroleum and Total.

The plant is designed to operate using either sugarcane juice or molasses as feedstock to produce daily 60,000 liters of fuel-grade anhydrous ethanol that is suitable for blending with gasoline.

Also, the Biofuels 88 project was expected to bring economic benefits to sugar cane growers by providing additional market; increased employment for seasonal farm workers; help increase the country's energy security; and support the government's effort to establish a domestic biofuel industry.

In earlier reports, Energy Secretary Raphael PM Lotilla was quoted as saying the government might defer the implementation of the Biofuels Act of 2006, which requires the use of gasoline and diesel with biofuel blends.

Lotilla cited the upcoming elections as the reason for the possible delay, saying that "people may be too distracted with the political exercise."

# *Nokia expanding distribution channels*

**By Riza T. Olchondra**

NOKIA CORP. EXPECTS TO keep its dominance in the Philippine mobile phone market as it aggressively pushes its 3G products to target clients through the expansion and improvement of its distribution channels, country manager William Hamilton-Whyte told reporters on Tuesday.

Whyte said the Philippines, with its mobile phone penetration placed at 47.76 percent, was now a mature market.

He declined to reveal his company's sales in the country but said the local market's awareness of and preference for Nokia products were very high. He said it was expected to stay that way despite aggressive marketing and sales efforts by competitors through ultra-low priced handsets and high-profile campaigns.

"We are strengthening our distribution system through Nokia stores and expanding consumer access to new offerings through operators and distributors," Whyte said.

In the meantime, Whyte said about 1.14 billion mobile phone handsets were expected to be sold worldwide this year.

He said 68 percent of the projected sales would go to the replacement market, as current users upgrade their phone models.

He said low-end phones were expected to continue selling well but demand for 3G, colored screens and camera functionality was expected to pick up. As for services, mobile TV, push e-mail and navigation are

NOKIA/B7

# The insurance supermarket

**QUESTIONS OF POLICIES**

*Honesto C. General*

IN 1951, I STARTED WORKING at the now-defunct FGU Insurance Group on Plaza Moraga, Binondo. Life then was far simpler—and cheaper—than it is today. I could get along quite well on my starting pay of P47 a week. A company-subsidized lunch cost only 80 centavos. If I wanted to splurge, I could buy a good Chinese meal for P1.20. A jeepney ride anywhere in Metro Manila cost 10 centavos, a coin that hardly exists today.

Although FGU was the leading company then, it had a very limited inventory of policies. We sold the simple fire and lightning policy. Car insurance was restricted to private cars; trucks, buses, taxis, jeepneys, motorcycles and tricycles were uninsurable. Marine insurance was limited to imports. The personal accident policy was new; the first policy we introduced had an annual premium of P6.

Life insurance was also a simple business. Although Insular Life opened in 1910 as the first domestic company, 40 years later everyone still felt Filipinos were not insurance conscious. Life insurance was sold more as a plan to save money, and less to protect the family from the untimely death of the breadwinner. As a result, the most popular policy was the expensive 20-Year Endowment.

The agent was usually a fellow everybody in the office liked. But he had very little technical training. He was more of a peddler. The women had not yet discovered insurance selling as a worthwhile career.

Today, one generation later, insurance is an extremely complicated business.

You can still buy a simple fire policy on your house but a lot of trimmings are available. You can tack on typhoon, flood and earthquake. You can add rental value; if your house burns down, the policy allows you to rent a house during reconstruction. You can cover your household contents against robbery and theft. You can get a liability policy, which pays for the injury of the mailman in case he gets bitten by your dog.

On your car, you can carry a Comprehensive Third Party Liability (CTPL) only. But, if you wish, you can insure your car against almost anything.

The insurance industry has become a veritable supermarket. You can amble through the accident department and choose from a wide variety of policies. You can buy an annual policy, and tack on frills like medical reimbursement. You can buy a limited travel insurance that covers you while in flight to anywhere.

In the health care department, you can buy from a health maintenance organization (HMO), or have a wide choice of policies with features like a fixed monthly income for medical expenses. Or the policy can be limited to so-called dread diseases like cancer.

The engineering departments sell contractors all-risks, machinery breakdown, electronic policies.

There is a department where you can buy such policies as products liability and director's liability.

In the crime department, there are policies covering against employee dishonesty, fraud, robbery, theft, kidnapping and—terrorism.

The life department gives you a wide choice of individual policies with such features as return of premium and declining sum insured. Life insurance is now used to protect the estate, to guarantee loan. Group insurance now includes pension management.

In this dizzying atmosphere, the agent has turned professional. He can no longer compete unless he has been intensively trained, highly motivated and closely supervised. Life insurance selling is now dominated by women, all well coifed and nattily dressed, and usually armed with laptops.

But, there is a big difference between the supermarket of goods and the supermarket of insurance. In the former, everything on display has a fixed price and specifications. In the latter, price and specifications are subject to negotiations under the intense heat of open competition among aggressive players.

You can shop at Rustan's Supermarket with supreme confidence that what you buy is what is said on the label at the price fixed in the tag. In the insurance supermarket, even if you were a small-time buyer, you had better not shop without the help of your favorite and friendly insurance broker.

# DBP ties up with Smart

SMART COMMUNICATIONS Inc. and Development Bank of the Philippines have formed a strategic partnership that will push for the use of mobile commerce in delivering financial services for small and medium enterprises, migrant workers and microfinance institutions.

Under the partnership, DBP will use Smart's mobile commerce platform, the Smart Services Hub, in developing new remittance and financial services and products.

"This partnership will allow both companies to reach out to the 'un-banked' and 'under-banked' sectors of our society," said Napoleon L. Nazareno, Smart president and CEO.

"This will give us an opportunity to serve more people, particularly through our various programs for overseas Filipino workers and entrepreneurs. We are also excited on the prospect of introducing mobile payments in the 48 roll-on, roll-off (Ro-Ro) ports connected nationwide through DBP's flagship project," said DBP president and chief executive Reynaldo G. David.

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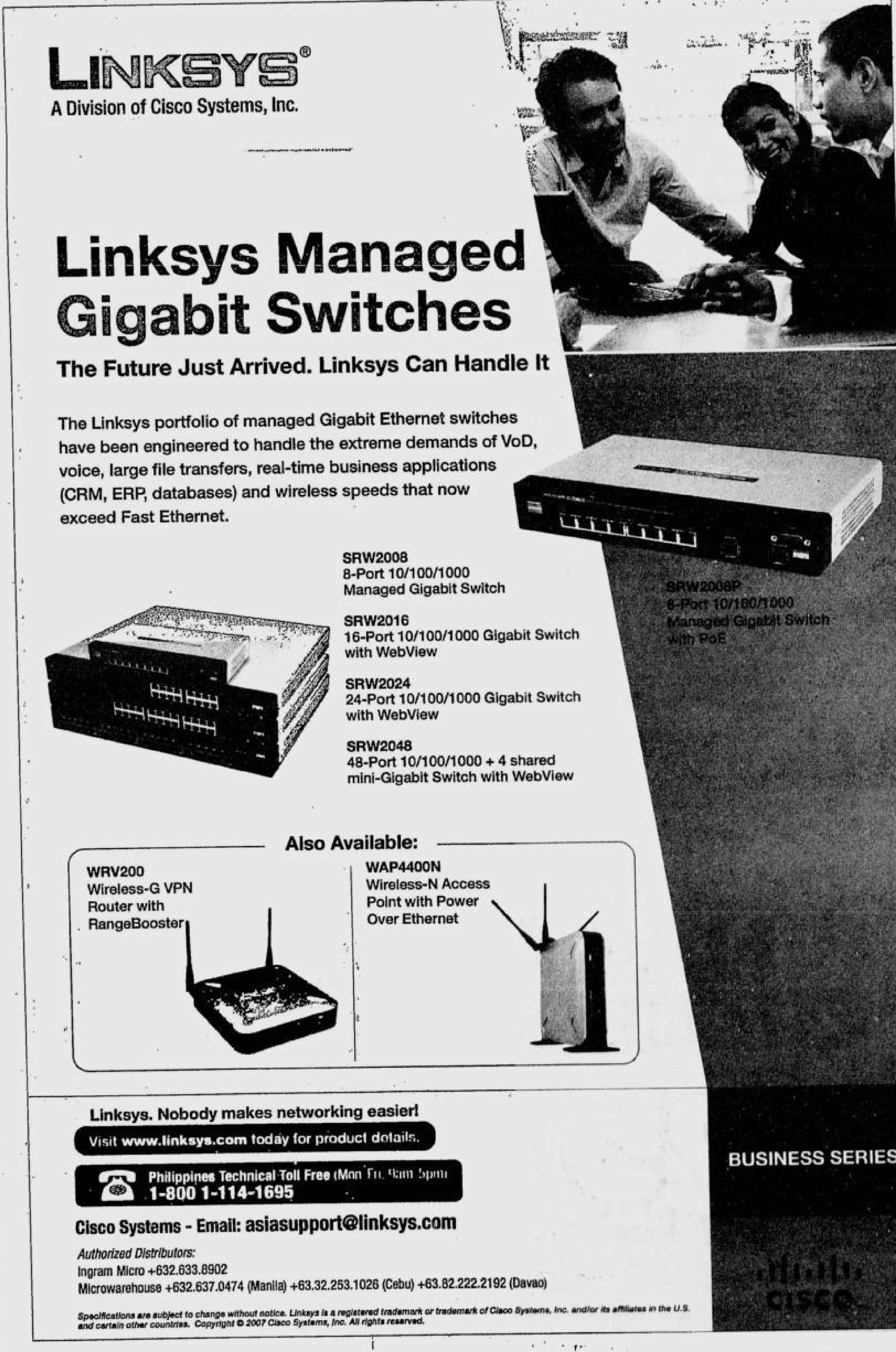

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# MNTC readies 2nd phase of P2.8-B NLEX expansion

**By Riza T. Olchondra**

MANILA NORTH TOLLWAYS Corp., which holds the concession to operate the North Luzon Expressway or NLEX, has started preparatory work for the second phase of the expressway's P2.8-billion expansion to cope with growing vehicle traffic, company president Jose de Jesus told reporters.

The first phase of NLEX's expansion was completed in February 2005.

The second phase is expected to further ease the flow of vehicles at the expressway despite the growing volume. Last year, 140,000 vehicles entered NLEX daily. The number rose slightly to 143,000 for the first two months of 2007.

"By end of year we are hoping to grow (our traffic volume) to 149,000 (daily)," De Jesus said.

Under the second phase, a new NLEX interchange will be built in Valenzuela. The interchange will be connected with MacArthur Highway in Valenzuela and with Mindanao Avenue in Quezon City.

"If you are coming from Quezon City and you want to go north, you take Mindanao Avenue and you don't have to go through Edsa to Balintawak. And when you're coming from the north you can avoid the huge traffic in Edsa, Muñoz and Balintawak," De Jesus said.

MNTC is now working on pre-construction activities, such as completing engineering designs and obtaining environmental clearance certificates.

For its part, the government is working on the acquisition of the right of way, which is expected to be obtained sometime October or November, De Jesus said.

About 30 percent of the P2.8-billion budget will come from internally generated funds and the rest will come from bank loans.

"We cannot yet start talking to them (banks) until everything is ready," De Jesus said.

The expansion, which will be done in segments to minimize traffic disruption, could take about two years.

MNTC chief finance officer Rodrigo E. Franco said in an earlier interview that there would also be a phase three project in the pipeline. This will connect the NLEX to Subic in Zambales.

# RP urged to liberalize cement industry

From page B1

the region could engender significant cost savings, thus enabling the government to step up public investment in infrastructure while adhering to its goal of balancing the budget (by 2008)," the bank said.

It said lower prices would also preserve the growth momentum in the housing construction sector that is now being perked up by strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

"The industry structure is oligopolistic and price competition appears to be constrained. The industry has become highly concentrated," the report said.

"Given the central role of cement in making infrastructure and housing sector investments affordable, in the short run, imports should be used as the basis for containing price pressures," the World Bank said.

In the medium term, the bank said the government should encourage new foreign and domestic entrants, actively promote the cement sector and strengthen its machinery to detect and deal with anti-competitive practices.

"Given the strategic importance of cement, it could be important to put in place a permanent mechanism to monitor demand and supply situation, price trends and industry practices with a view to maintaining competitive conditions," it said.

As of the fourth quarter of 2006, cement prices in the Philippines averaged at about $72 a ton as against $35 in China, $52 in India, $49 in Malaysia, $50 in Thailand, $69 in Indonesia and $65 in Vietnam.

The bank pointed out that the country's top three cement makers—multinational corporations Holcim, LaFarge and Cemex—accounted for nearly 90 percent of installed clinker capacity of 22 million tons, while the remaining 20 percent was in the hands of four small independent producers.

"This is very different from the situation prevailing at end-1999 when more than 15 firms were operating in the market," the report said.

Despite the fact that the industry was currently operating at about 55 percent of installed capacity, prices have risen over the last four years although at a decelerating pace. Citing the Cement Manufacturers of the Philippines' own data, the World Bank reported that cement prices have surged by 23.5 percent in 2002 (from a year ago), 25.9 percent in 2003, 13.8 percent in 2004 and 6.1 percent by 2005.

And despite operating at low levels of capacity utilization and high fuel costs, the report noted that cement producers have been able to maintain profitability by adjusting prices by as much as 75 percent since 2000. As such, the bank said their Ebitda (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) were maintained at par with those of producers in other countries where capacity utilization were much higher.

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GLOBE TELECOM

## NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of **GLOBE TELECOM, INC.** will be held at the Grand Ballroom, InterContinental Manila, Ayala Center, Makati City on **WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH 2007 at 2:30 P.M.** with the following

**AGENDA**

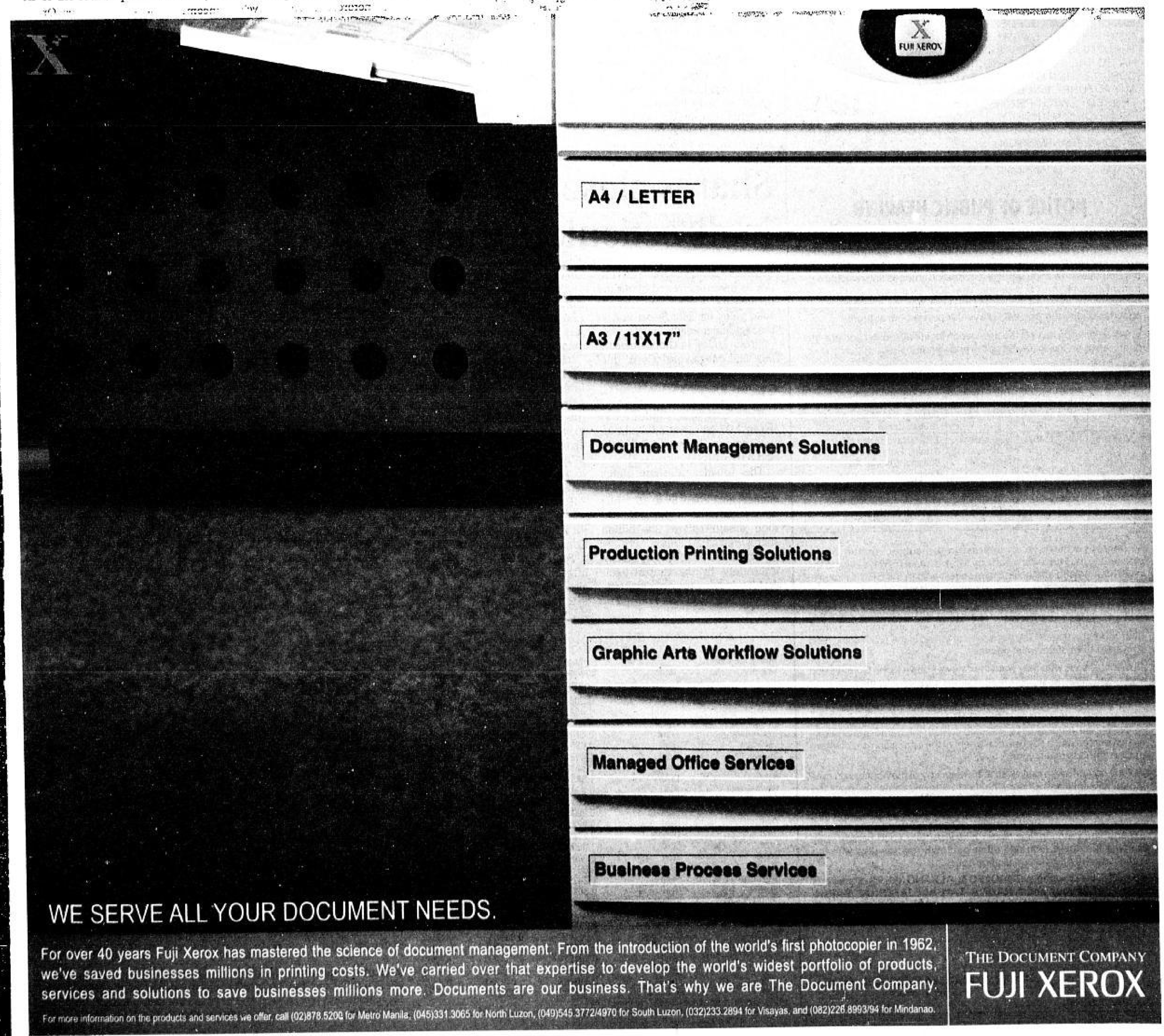
1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Annual Report of Officers
4. New Business
    - 4.1 Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management adopted in the ordinary course of business during the preceding year.
5. Election of Directors (including the Independent Directors)
6. Election of Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration
7. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting
8. Adjournment

Stockholders of record as of **16 February 2007** shall be the stockholders entitled to vote at this meeting. As per By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Books of the Corporation will be closed from **16 to 23 February 2007** and **26 to 28 March 2007**, inclusive.

Mandaluyong City, 02 February 2007.

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RENATO O. MARZAN
Corporate Secretary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# Fil-Estate unveils ₱5-B blueprint for Camp John Hay expansion

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

FIL-ESTATE CORP. YESTERDAY UNVEILED A P5-billion blueprint to expand the Camp John Hay leisure complex in Baguio City.

Fil-Estate chair Robert John Sobrepeña said the expansion would involve five new projects over some 20 hectares of the 247-hectare former US facility.

The Fil-Estate group is taking a more aggressive stance in property development with the boom in the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector and the demand for retirement and leisure homes.

"We believe this move will take advantage of economic conditions and improve shareholder value (for Fil-Estate stockholders)," Sobrepeña said during yesterday's stockholder's meeting at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong.

He said the Fil-Estate group was now building a second condominium-hotel that will consist of 366 units.

The group will also build forest cabins, which will cost between P8 million and P10 million each, and undertake a "town center development" to be made up of a commercial center, an information technology (IT) campus that hopes to lure 20,000 to 30,000 employees, and business park residences to cater to BPO workers.

Fil-Estate will also embark on a leisure homes project, which will include five condominium buildings that will cater to foreign and local retirees.

## Restructuring of P2.1-B arrears pushed

Fil-Estate also plans to put up a third hotel located beside the Camp John Hay Convention Center. The hotel can be converted into a casino-hotel once Fil-Estate decides to pursue a gaming license.

Sobrepeña said he was hopeful these plans would be supported by a bill passed by Congress that restored tax benefits for special zones such as Camp John Hay.

He said the revival of the tax perks would help Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco), owned by the the Fil-Estate group, to finalize a restructuring agreement with state-led Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) to settle more than P2.1 billion in arrears owed to government.

CJHDevco suspended all of its payments in 2005 when the Supreme Court affirmed its 2003 decision nullifying the tax benefits that former President Fidel Ramos gave to the Camp John Hay Special Economic Zone in 1994.

The decision has affected all BCDA-administered economic zones, except for the Subic Bay Freeport.

Sobrepeña said the restructuring agreement proposes to restructure P1.8 billion of the debt over 15 years and the balance to be paid upon the signing of the agreement.

On Monday, Fil-Estate announced that it would buy 30 percent of Camp John Hay from its controlling shareholder Fil-Estate Management Inc. (Femi), which holds a 45-percent interest in the former US air base project.

In exchange for Femi's stake, Fil-Estate will issue P450 million worth of new shares to Femi, which will increase the latter's stake in Fil-Estate to 83 percent from 76 percent.

The purchase agreement would take effect upon securing the necessary government approvals, Fil-Estate said.

Camp John Hay is projected to provide net cash flow of P28.3 billion over the next 39 years from the proposed projects.

Meantime, Sobrepeña said that Monumento Rail Transit Corp., a subsidiary of Fil-Estate, has proposed to the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC) to expand the Metro Rail Transit 3 line to accommodate 650,000 passengers a day from the current ridership of 480,000 a day.

The MRT 3 line has exceeded its capacity of 350,000 passengers a day and this was bound to cause system breakdowns and jack up maintenance costs of the mass transit system, Sobrepeña said.

He said there was a need to purchase 30 light rail vehicles with a total estimated project cost of $65 million.

# Pacific Online to expand lottery terminals

By Abigail L. Ho

BELLE CORP. UNIT PACIFIC ONline Systems Corp. will be expanding its 1,000-terminal lottery business in the Visayas and Mindanao by adding 500 terminals this year and another 500 next year, in a bid to further jack up the P4 billion in sales it posted last year.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Belle vice chair Willy Ocier said the company would use proceeds from its recently approved initial public offering to fund the expansion.

He said each terminal costs about $3,000, bringing the investment required to roll out 500 terminals this year at $1.5 million, or approximately P72.8 million.

The Philippine Stock Exchange recently approved Belle's application for Pacific Online to offer shares to the public.

Under the approval, Pacific Online can list 191 million common shares, 39.8 million of which will be offered to the public via the IPO. This is expected to raise some P370.1 million, using the higher end of the offer price range of P8.50 to P9.30 each.

Ocier said prospects for the company's online gaming business were rosy, considering that from sales of only P1 billion in 2001, revenues rose to P4 billion in 2006.

Actual earnings from the lottery system, which the company gets from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office as a percentage of total sales, have likewise improved from less than P100 million in 2001 to about P400 million last year—equivalent to 10 percent of total sales.

In other countries, he said gaming firms had price-earnings ratios of as much as 40 times.

With most of the infrastructure already in place and with equipment and connectivity now cheaper, he said Pacific Online could easily take advantage of the country's growing lottery market.

Apart from controlling the lottery systems in the Visayas and Mindanao on behalf of the PCSO, he said Pacific Online was also developing other gaming activities that it could eventually sell to PCSO.

After its IPO, he said Pacific Online would eventually be folded into Belle's investments holding firm Sinophil Corp.

Sinopil would then become Belle's gaming subsidiary, he said.

Republic of the Philippines
**ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF CONNECTION CHARGES AND RESIDUAL SUB-TRANSMISSION CHARGES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2007 ON THE EXCLUDED SERVICES COVERING THE EXISTING SUB-TRANSMISSION ASSETS OF THE NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO) AND ANY FUTURE CONCESSIONAIRE THEREOF, WITH PRAYER FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASE NO. 2007-007 RC

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO,)
Applicant.
x - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Notice is hereby given that on January 22, 2007, the National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) filed an application praying for the Commission's approval of its connection charges and residual sub-transmission charges for calendar year 2007 on the excluded services covering its existing sub-transmission assets and any future concessionaire thereof, with prayer for provisional authority.

The Commission has set the application for initial hearing and pre-trial conference on the following dates and venues:

| AREA | DATE | TIME | VENUE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Luzon | March 8, 2007 (Thursday) | Ten o'clock in the morning (10:00 A.M.) | ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City |
| Visayas | April 13, 2007 (Friday) | Nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.) | ERC Visayas Field Office, Ground Floor, Machay Building, Gorordo Avenue, Cebu City |
| Mindanao | April 26, 2007 (Thursday) | Nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.) | ERC Mindanao Field Office, Mezzanine Floor, Mintrade Building, Monteverde corner Sales Sts., Davao City |

All persons who have an interest in the subject matter of the proceeding may become a party by filing, at least (5) days prior to the initial hearing and subject to the requirements in the ERC's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a verified petition with the Commission giving the docket number and title of the proceeding and stating: (1) the petitioner's name and address; (2) the nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding, and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding; and (3) a statement of the relief desired.

All other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the proceeding may file their opposition to the application or comment thereon at any stage of the proceeding before the applicant concludes the presentation of its evidence. No particular form of opposition or comment is required, but the document, letter or writing should contain the name and address of such person and a concise statement of the opposition or comment and the grounds relied upon.

All such persons who may wish to have a copy of the application may request the applicant, prior to the date of the initial hearing, that they be furnished with a copy of the application. The applicant is hereby directed to furnish all those making such request with copies of the application and its attachments, subject to reimbursement of reasonable photocopying costs. Likewise, any such person may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

**WITNESS,** the Honorable, **RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR.,** Chairman and Honorable Commissioners, **RAUF A. TAN, ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN, MARIA TERESA A.R. CASTAÑEDA,** and **JOSE C. REYES,** Energy Regulatory Commission, this 27th day of February, 2007 at Pasig City.

**(Sgd.) ATTY. FRANCIS SATURNINO C. JUAN**
Executive Director

(PDI – MARCH 21, 2007)

# Shares close flat in directionless trade

SHARES CLOSED FLAT YESTERday as investors fretted about the outlook for interest rates despite solid gains on Wall Street and in the regional markets, dealers said.

Profit-taking in Globe Telecom Inc. and Megaworld Corp. outweighed gains in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the dealers added.

The composite index was down 2.07 points at 3,039.31 after moving between 2,990.46 and 3,075.11.

The broader all-share index rose 0.83 points to 1,971.14. Gainers beat losers 59 to 35, while 64 stocks ended unchanged. Volume amounted to 3.8 billion shares worth P2.1 billion.

"There are already very strong indications by the central bank that it is leaning toward a tightening of rates," said Ron Rodrigo of Unicapital Securities Inc.

"This will keep investors cautious, if not (cause them to) stay altogether on the sidelines, unless there are more positive developments," he added.

Last week, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas kept its benchmark interest rate unchanged at 7.5 percent. Since last November, this rate has been applicable only to banks' overnight placements of up to P5 billion.

Top-traded PLDT gained P10 to P2,295 while its rival Globe Telecom fell P50 to P1,295.

Property developer Megaworld Corp. shed five centavos to P2.90 while conglomerate Ayala Corp. was steady at P545.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s "A" and "B" shares also closed steady at P63.50 and P72, respectively. *AFP*

## CURRENCIES

| March 20, 2007 Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.752389 | 1.000000 | 48.8040 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.006404 | 0.008511 | 0.4154 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.462794 | 1.944200 | 94.8847 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.096304 | 0.127998 | 6.2468 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.620373 | 0.824538 | 40.2408 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.638917 | 0.849185 | 41.4436 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.493176 | 0.655480 | 31.9900 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.601286 | 0.799169 | 39.0026 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 1.995779 | 2.652590 | 129.4570 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.200658 | 0.266695 | 13.0158 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.491565 | 0.653339 | 31.8856 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000081 | 0.000108 | 0.0053 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.022973 | 0.030534 | 1.4902 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.204910 | 0.272346 | 13.2916 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.329100 | 64.8654 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000798 | 0.001060 | 0.0517 |
| China | Yuan** | 0.097258 | 0.129266 | 6.3087 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.242902 | 0.322841 | 15.7559 |
| Brazil | Real | 0.361725 | 0.480769 | 23.4635 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134300 | 0.178498 | 8.7114 |
| India | Rupee | 0.017080 | 0.022701 | 1.1079 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.215030 | 0.285796 | 13.9480 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.067597 | 0.089843 | 4.3847 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.527585 | 0.701213 | 34.2220 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.101537 | 0.134953 | 6.5862 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.107665 | 0.143098 | 6.9838 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.014494 | 0.019264 | 0.9402 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.022732 | 0.030213 | 1.4745 |

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—March 19, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of March 19, 2007

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 20, 2007)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FINANCIAL** | | | | | |
| **BANKS** | | | | | |
| Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc. | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10 | 10 | 31,600 |
| Banco de Oro Univ. Bank | 57 | 57 | 56 | 56 | 637,900 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 65 | 65 | 63 | 63.5 | 1,406,700 |
| China Banking Corp. | 850 | 870 | 850 | 870 | 18,320 |
| Citystate Savings Bank | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 300 |
| Export and Ind. Bank A | 0.52 | 0.52 | 0.51 | 0.52 | 2,350,000 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 99 | 99 | 99 | 99 | 14,600 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 58.5 | 58.5 | 58 | 58.5 | 323,700 |
| Phil. Bank of Comm. A | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 1,000 |
| Philippine National Bank | 47.5 | 47.5 | 47 | 47 | 8,800 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 62 | 62.5 | 62 | 62 | 1,200 |
| Security Bank Corp. | 75 | 75 | 73.5 | 73.5 | 112,300 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 57.5 | 57.5 | 56.5 | 57.5 | 29,300 |
| **OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTION** | | | | | |
| Citiseconline.Com Inc. | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 453,000 |
| First Metro Invest. Corp. | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 10,000 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1610 | 1630 | 1610 | 1630 | 1,440 |
| Phil. Stock Exchange Inc. | 630 | 650 | 625 | 650 | 1,810 |
| Sun Life Financial Inc. | 2100 | 2100 | 2100 | 2100 | 500 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 72,000 |
| **ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER** | | | | | |
| Pnoc Energy Dev. Corp. | 5.8 | 6 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 33,474,000 |
| First Gen Corp. | 53 | 54 | 53 | 53.5 | 682,800 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 70.5 | 70.5 | 69 | 69 | 221,000 |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 68 | 68.5 | 67.5 | 68 | 200,100 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 67.5 | 69.5 | 67.5 | 68.5 | 1,312,900 |
| Manila Water Co. Inc. | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9 | 9 | 531,000 |
| Petron Corp. | 4.25 | 4.35 | 4.2 | 4.35 | 4,100,000 |
| East Asia Power Res. Corp. | 0.27 | 0.28 | 0.27 | 0.28 | 510,000 |
| Salcon Power Corp. | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 20,000 |
| Trans-Asia Oil and Energy | 1.38 | 1.4 | 1.38 | 1.4 | 110,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Ginebra San Miguel Inc. | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 13,600 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 52 | 53 | 52 | 52.5 | 346,800 |
| Roxas Holdings Inc. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 43,000 |
| Swift Food Inc. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 10,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 63.5 | 63.5 | 63.5 | 63.5 | 182,400 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 72 | 72 | 71.5 | 72 | 114,000 |
| Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc. | 2.24 | 2.26 | 2.24 | 2.24 | 1,532,000 |
| Universal Robina Corp. | 17.75 | 17.75 | 17.25 | 17.25 | 219,700 |
| **CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Southeast Asian Cement | 1.68 | 1.72 | 1.66 | 1.68 | 5,900,000 |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | 4.55 | 4.55 | 4.5 | 4.55 | 2,842,000 |
| Holcim Philippines Inc. | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 267,000 |
| Republic Cement Corp. | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 5.7 | 114,000 |
| **CHEMICALS** | | | | | |
| Chemrez Technologies Inc. | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 1,715,000 |
| **DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS** | | | | | |
| Picop Resources Inc. | 0.33 | 0.34 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 4,730,000 |
| **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg A | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 395,800,000 |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg B | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 19,000,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 555 | 555 | 545 | 545 | 229,060 |
| Alsons Cons. Res. Inc. | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 100,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 878,000 |
| Alliance Global Group Inc. | 6.9 | 7.1 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 2,584,000 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 0.0775 | 0.08 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 124,300,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 283,000 |
| APC Group Inc. | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 6,990,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 391,000,000 |
| Anglo Phil Holdings Corp. | 1.66 | 1.66 | 1.56 | 1.6 | 11,983,000 |
| Pal Holdings Inc. | 3.45 | 3.6 | 3.45 | 3.6 | 156,000 |
| Balabac Resources & Hldgs | 4.75 | 4.75 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 322,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.25 | 3.3 | 6,931,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 6.9 | 7.2 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 2,541,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 318,000 |
| Forum Pacific Inc. | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 200,000 |
| House of Investments Inc. | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 100,000 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 12.5 | 12.75 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 2,929,000 |
| Medco Holdings | 0.32 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.33 | 1,200,000 |
| Magnum Holdings Inc. | 9.1 | 9.3 | 8.9 | 9.1 | 3,578,000 |
| Multitech Inv. Corp. | 1.96 | 2.22 | 1.96 | 2.18 | 11,627,000 |
| Prime Orion Phils. Inc. | 0.27 | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.27 | 4,700,000 |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 53,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.71 | 0.72 | 200,000 |
| Sinophil Corp. | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 19,140,000 |
| SM Investments Corp. | 350 | 350 | 347.5 | 350 | 29,500 |
| South China Resources Inc. | 1.08 | 1.1 | 1.08 | 1.1 | 115,000 |
| Seafront Resources Corp. | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 24,000 |
| Vivant Corp. | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.18 | 0.19 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 2,660,000 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 15.75 | 15.75 | 15.25 | 15.5 | 5,646,600 |
| Belle Corp. | 1.42 | 1.44 | 1.38 | 1.4 | 7,829,000 |
| A Brown Company Inc. | 1.22 | 1.24 | 1.2 | 1.24 | 510,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 910,000 |
| Cebu Holdings Inc. | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 1,048,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.44 | 2.44 | 69,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 300,000 |
| EIB Realty Developers Inc. | 0.2 | 0.22 | 0.2 | 0.22 | 50,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 10,030,000 |
| Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc. | 1.82 | 1.84 | 1.82 | 1.84 | 595,000 |
| Ever-Gotesco Resources | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.0775 | 0.08 | 17,500,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.66 | 1.66 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 20,917,000 |
| Gotesco Land Inc. | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 130,000 |
| Gotesco Land Inc.B | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 450,000 |
| Interport Res. | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 5,000,000 |
| Interport Res. B | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 28,000,000 |
| Kuok Phil. Properties | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 1,400,000 |
| City & Land Developers | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 60,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land Inc. | 0.8 | 0.81 | 0.8 | 0.81 | 860,000 |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. B | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.025 | 100,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 3 | 3.05 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 42,709,000 |
| Metro Pacific Inv. Corp. | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 18,000 |
| MRC Allied Ind. Inc. | 0.86 | 0.88 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 10,580,000 |
| Polar Property Holdings | 2.55 | 2.65 | 2.55 | 2.6 | 272,000 |
| Robinsons Land Corp. | 18.5 | 19.25 | 18.5 | 18.75 | 826,300 |
| Phil Realty and Holdings | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1,180,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 3.85 | 3.9 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 389,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 10.75 | 11 | 10.75 | 10.75 | 7,923,900 |
| Suntrust Home Dev. Inc. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 10,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.22 | 0.225 | 0.2 | 0.21 | 40,820,000 |
| **MEDIA** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 25 | 25.5 | 25 | 25 | 128,000 |
| **TELECOMMUNICATIONS** | | | | | |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 1.72 | 1.72 | 1.68 | 1.68 | 3,316,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 1335 | 1335 | 1295 | 1295 | 18,880 |
| Pilipino Tel. Corp. | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 873,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 2300 | 2315 | 2295 | 2295 | 96,850 |
| **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** | | | | | |
| Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 3,170,000 |
| Diversified Fin. Network | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 54,000 |
| Imperial Res. | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 10,500,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 2.32 | 2.32 | 2.24 | 2.24 | 815,000 |
| IPVG Corp. | 6 | 6.3 | 5.9 | 6.2 | 3,734,000 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.055 | 0.055 | 0.055 | 0.055 | 1,000,000 |
| ISM Communications Corp. | 0.06 | 0.0625 | 0.06 | 0.06 | 13,300,000 |
| Music Semiconductors Corp. | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 55,000 |
| Transpacific Broadband | 2.16 | 2.22 | 2.12 | 2.12 | 91,000 |
| Philweb Corp. | 0.046 | 0.046 | 0.044 | 0.045 | 89,800,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 61,000 |
| Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp. | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 35,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 29 | 29.5 | 28.5 | 28.5 | 68,000 |
| Keppel Phils. Marine Inc. | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1,090,000 |
| **HOTEL & LEISURE** | | | | | |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | 3.8 | 3.85 | 3.65 | 3.7 | 15,472,000 |
| Manila Jockey Club | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 113,000 |
| Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. | 0.35 | 0.36 | 0.35 | 0.36 | 700,000 |
| Philippine Racing Club | 4.05 | 4.05 | 4.05 | 4.05 | 20,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | 0.96 | 1.02 | 0.96 | 1.02 | 6,960,000 |
| **EDUCATION** | | | | | |
| IPeople Inc. | 3.15 | 3.3 | 3.15 | 3.3 | 835,000 |
| **DIVERSIFIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Macroasia Corp. | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 385,000 |
| Paxys Inc. | 26 | 26.5 | 26 | 26 | 385,900 |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. A | 5 | 5 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 349,000 |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. B | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 109,000 |
| Abra Mining & Industrial | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.011 | 0.012 | 146,000,000 |
| Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't | 10.25 | 10.5 | 9.9 | 10 | 5,280,000 |
| Benguet Corp. A | 11.25 | 11.25 | 11.25 | 11.25 | 10,000 |
| Dizon Copper Silver Mines | 2.55 | 2.55 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 36,000 |
| Geograce Res. Phil. Inc. | 1.6 | 1.66 | 1.56 | 1.64 | 121,231,000 |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 5,190,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 6,040,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. A | 0.028 | 0.028 | 0.028 | 0.028 | 426,000,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. B | 0.033 | 0.034 | 0.033 | 0.033 | 118,700,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.018 | 0.019 | 0.018 | 0.019 | 1,389,800,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.25 | 4.3 | 6,017,000 |
| Semirara Mining Corp. | 21.25 | 21.25 | 21 | 21 | 260,200 |
| United Paragon Mining Co. | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.71 | 0.71 | 1,750,000 |
| Vulcan Ind'l | 1.26 | 1.28 | 1.18 | 1.2 | 12,269,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Basic Petroleum Corp. | 0.47 | 0.47 | 0.43 | 0.44 | 17,110,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A | 0.013 | 0.014 | 0.013 | 0.014 | 30,300,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 46,200,000 |
| The Philodrill Corp. | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 75,000,000 |
| Petroenergy Res. Corp. | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 22,000 |

## DISCLOSURES

RAMONCITO Z. Abad has been elected independent director of **Anglo Philippine Holdings Corp.** to replace Leonardo R. Arguelles Jr.,

* * *

**BOGO-Medellin Milling Co. Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 27, 10 a.m. at Barangay Luy-a, Medellin, Cebu. Stockholders of record as of March 9 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

* * *

**SECURITY Bank Corp.** has disclosed the acquisition of 1,000 shares for P74.50 each by executive vice president Jesus Roberto S. Reyes on March 15.

* * *

**MABUHAY Vinyl Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 26, 3 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club in Salcedo Village, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 26 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

***Compiled by Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research***

# 91-day T-bill rate seen rising to 5%

By Doris C. Dumlao

AMERICAN EXPRESS BANK SEES THE yield on the 91-day treasury bill rising to 5 percent and the peso firming up at 48.20 against the US dollar over the next three months.

The average 91-day T-bill rate has crept up to 2.998 percent as of last Monday, up from the record low of 2.885 percent two auctions ago.

Prior to that, it was on a five-month downtrend, reflecting the government's much-improved fiscal position and the country's easing inflation rate.

Amex in its strategy report for March that its projected rise in three-month interest rate to 5 percent implied a return (net of inflation and tax costs) of 2.5 percent.

"Money supply has accelerated and market rates are now very low. Three-month T-bills yielding 3 percent are barely positive in real terms," Amex said.

As such, Amex said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would likely keep overnight rates steady, despite the fall in inflation to a five-year low of 2.6 percent a year.

The London-based economics unit of Amex Bank also said: "The peso should stay volatile for a while as carry trades continue to unwind but the US dollar weakness we expect should give

91-DAY/B6

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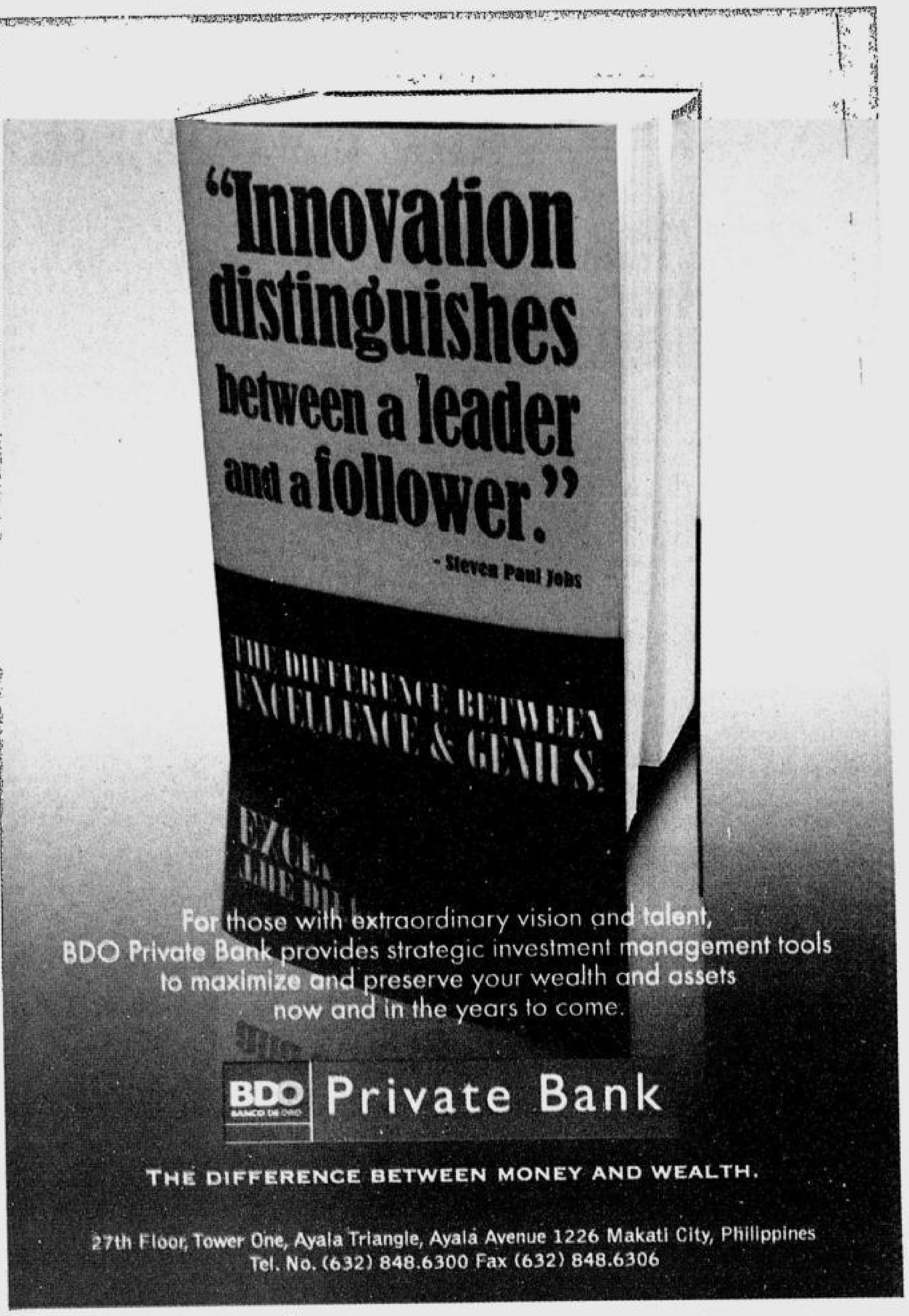

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# Visayan co-op to pay high power rates starting '09

## Selling price from PNOC-EDC plant to rise to P4.88/kwh

**By Abigail L. Ho**

THE ABOITIZ-OWNED VISAYAN Electric Co. Inc. (Veco) will enjoy cheaper power rates from PNOC Energy Development Corp.'s 49-megawatt (MW) Northern Negros Geothermal Plant (NNGP) only until 2009.

After that, the cost of power will go up.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, PNOC-EDC information officer Erudito Recio said that for the first 24 months of the listed firm's five-year electricity sales agreement with Veco, the selling price would be based on the Visayas grid tariff of the National Power Corp.

As approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission, Napocor currently sells electricity at an average of P3.42 a kilowatt-hour (kWh) in the Visayas grid.

After two years, however, Recio said the selling price to Veco of power generated by the NNGP would no longer be pegged on the Napocor rate, but would instead rise to P4.88 a kWh.

PNOC-EDC's five-year contract with Veco is for 635 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of power, at a contract capacity of 15 megawatts.

The $68.5-million NNGP is seen as a "critical" installation in the Visayas grid, where 1,498 MW of new capacity is needed to meet this year's projected peak demand of 1,214 MW.

The Negros islands alone have a peak demand of 205 MW, but a dependable capacity of only 180 MW.

With the new plant now running, Negros can now address its 25-MW supply deficit.

The new plant will provide power to some 800,000 households via electricity sales agreements with Veco for 635 GWh and Iloilo Electric Cooperative for 606 GWh.

Power generated by the plant will be distributed via a 25-kilometer line leading to the National Transmission Corp.'s Mansilingan substation.

The NNGP is PNOC-EDC's first wholly-owned power generation facility.

PNOC-EDC now has five geothermal production fields, including those in Leyte, Southern Negros, Bicol and North Cotabato.

The state firm is the country's largest geothermal energy producer, with an installed capacity of 1,198 MW.

Republic of the Philippines
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT**
**National Capital Region**
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**NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)**

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

| Name and address of Company/Employer | Name of Foreign National | Position |
|---|---|---|
| KEPCO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION<br>18/F Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Salcedo Village, Makati City | Chung Kook Choi | Auditor |
| INTERNATIONAL TRADEWEAR, INC.<br>70-B Linaw St., Siena, Quezon City | Suraj Hiranand Khanchandani | Vice President for Marketing |
| SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS PHILIPPINES CORPORATION<br>G/F Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills San Juan, MM | In Hye Choi | PVI Sr. Staff, CE Team |
| BOT LEASE AND FINANCE PHILIPPINES, INC.<br>3/F Prince Bldg., 117 Rada St., Legaspi Village, Makati City | Chihiro Sakamoto | Chairman of the Board and President |
| HANAMURA INDUSTRIES CO., LTD.<br>Unit 1417 Herrera cor. Valero Sts., Makati City | Hirotaka Ito | Manager |
| PB HUGE LIFESTYLES, INC.<br>65D Bagsakan cor. Sirloin Road, FTI Complex, Taguig City | Muhammad Sajid | Executive Vice-President for Operations |

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

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(PDI-March 21, 2007)

# Farmers get more loans from LBP

**By Delmar Cariño**
*Inquirer Northern Luzon*

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Two innovative financing schemes introduced by the Land Bank of the Philippines a few years ago have enhanced the bank's lending performance and reputation as the top loan institution for farmers, a top LBP official said.

Diosdado Domingo, executive officer of Land Bank's program management department, said the bank's "key coop (cooperative)" and "agriculture business enterprise" lending approaches now account for 65 percent of its loan portfolio.

Domingo said the two schemes have eliminated bad loans and revived fledgling farmers' cooperatives saddled by cash flow problems.

Under the two approaches, LBP granted loans to big cooperatives and to agribusiness groups that, in turn, lend the borrowed capital to farmers' cooperatives.

The two programs improved the financial and organizational viability of small farmers' cooperatives.

LBP can lend up to P100 million. The loan matures in 10 years and carry an annual interest of 10 to 12 percent.

Domingo said the bank now has 4,600 cooperatives as clients with a combined total loan of P15 billion to P17 billion.

Of this number, farmers' cooperatives have an outstanding loan of P13 billion to P14 billion.

Mindanao groups have cornered most of the loans since their area is less prone to natural calamities, a problem of farmers in the northern part of the country, he said.

# Saudi Arabia to help RP certify halal goods

**By Judy Quiros**
*Inquirer Mindanao*

DAVAO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT of Saudi Arabia has pledged to help the Philippines penetrate the halal food market.

Trade Assistant Secretary Merly Cruz, who flew last month to Saudi Arabia as part of a 14-man delegation, said the Saudi Arabia Food and Drugs Authority (SAFD) has committed to help validate the proposed guidelines that will govern the production of halal food.

Products certified as halal, or permissible to be eaten by Muslims, can then be exported to Muslim countries.

Halal foods do not contain banned ingredients, such as pork, and are prepared according to Islamic law.

Cruz said following the discussion with SAFD officials, the delegation has urged the national government to speed up the establishment of the Philippine Halal Accreditation Body.

She said the group has also recommended the strengthening of coordination between the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (Saso) and the SAFD in connection with the planned issuance of the Philippine halal certification to Filipino companies.

Cruz said SAFD officials also told them that the export of processed and frozen seafood, including tuna and sardines, fruits and vegetables, does not require halal certification.

Cruz said another positive development was that SAFD also told the group that halal-certified food products from the Philippines, which have already entered the United Arab Emirates (UAE), can also be allowed in Saudi Arabia.

"The agency further clarified that product standards conforming to those set by the Gulf Coordinating Council (GCC) are recognized in the KSA as the Kingdom is a GCC member-country," she said.

# DA to enhance farmers' access to major markets

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture is bent on improving vegetable farmers' direct access to major markets in Metro Manila to free them from unscrupulous traders.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said in a recent briefing here that the problem hounding the country's agribusiness sector was not production but profitability.

"The concern now is to create an environment of profitability for our farmers," he said.

Yap said cabbage, carrots, potatoes and *pechay* were sold in La Trinidad, Benguet, at P17, P21, P22 and P16 a kilogram, respectively.

He said these vegetables fetch much higher prices in Metro Manila—cabbage and carrots at P30 a kg, potatoes at P40 a kg and *pechay* at P25 a kg.

He said the farmers should enjoy the price difference by bringing the products closer to the market.

Yap said the DA has now shifted its policy from production-driven to market-oriented agriculture.

It plans to provide more support services in terms of infrastructure, credit system and irrigation.

Yap said along this line, the DA has created more "*bagsakans*" or drop-off points that would allow the farmers to deal directly with consumers.

There are three major domestic markets for vegetables in Metro Manila today—Commonwealth (Quezon City), Mutya ng Pasig (Pasay City) and Pamilihang Bayan ng Muntinlupa (Muntinlupa City).

These markets service 13 retail outlets and 24 service areas.

But Yap said the DA would open nine more markets to supply the needs of at least two million consumers by July.

He said these markets would provide outlets for around 1.5 million kg of vegetables traded daily at the vegetable trading post in La Trinidad. *Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

# 91-day treasury ...

From page B5

the currency an appreciation bias."

In recent weeks, regional currency markets were under pressure not just from Wall Street jitters but also the selling by global fund managers of huge yen "carry trades"—or the practice of borrowing cheap money from Japan and investing in higher-yielding investments.

Amex said the peso would likely appreciate to 48 against the US dollar in the next 12 months, representing a gain of about 1.6 percent.

The bank also assigned a risk probability of only 10 percent that the peso would undergo a "large" devaluation—defined as a fall in value of more than 10 percent—against the greenback in the next three months.

The same degree of risk was given to other Asian currencies, like the Japanese yen, Indonesia's rupiah, South Korean won and Thai baht.

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| New Media | New Trends in Internet Marketing/Google Marketing Secrets |
| Consumer | The new code on marketing evolution |

Day 2

Global Trends

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| Global Consumer Trends | Da Vinci Consumers: who are they? |
| Media Trends | Understanding consumer generated media |
| Innovation Trends | Discovering the way people see medicine and healthcare |

Philippine Marketing Trends

| | |
|---|---|
| Pinoy Consumers | Understanding the Filipino shopping code in Metro Manila |
| Mobile Marketing | Beyond the special 4 digit code: the new power of Mobile |
| Marketing to OFWs | Exploring means of reaching 10 million Filipinos abroad |
| Marketing Forum on Sunrise Industries | Unearthing the Potentials of Sunrise Industries: Medical Tourism, Retirement Villages & BPO |

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## GOINGS-ON

### Free business forum

ROBERT AGUILAR, a successful realtor from Los Angeles, California and a director of a US-based firm, will conduct a free business forum dubbed "Building your financial lifestyle strategy."

Hosted by Agel Philippines, the seminar will be held on March 24—one at 1 p.m and and another at 5 p.m.—at the Vienna Room, Horizon Hotel in Mandaluyong City. For reservations, call Lea Gadong at 633-1265 or 0918-335-9686.

### Plaza Fair in Mindanao

THE PLAZA FAIR GROUP is embarking on a comprehensive expansion program in Mindanao in a bid to gain a strong foothold in the retail market in this region.

Plaza Fair Cagayan de Oro dominates the retail market in this area, making the group the No. 1 department store and supermarket in Northern Mindanao.

Plaza Fair Paseo de Zamboanga, located along Gov. Camins Avenue corner Nuñez Ext., Zamboanga, is up for expansion.

Fair Price Club (Wholesale), located at KM. 2 JC Aquino Ave., Libertad in Butuan City, will be concentrating on the department store business.

# UCPB sets up OFW banking unit

## Bank starts improving systems, infrastructure

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

UNITED COCONUT PLANTERS Bank will set up a new unit for overseas Filipino workers in April to get a bigger slice of the $14-billion remittance market.

In a statement issued yesterday, UCPB executive vice president for institutional and retail banking Higinio Macadaeg said the unit would focus solely on developing special products and services to meet the banking needs of the OFWs.

These products and services include pre-departure loans, remittance services, housing loans, auto loans, educational loans, small business loans, investment and retirement planning.

"Our strategy is to capture the OFWs' banking requirements at every stage of the overseas employment cycle, from the moment they get their foreign contracts to the time they get settled in their jobs abroad and begin sending money back to their relatives here. We also intend to have the products and services that will help them begin building their savings and investments in preparation for their retirement from overseas work," Macadaeg said.

He said this OFW banking strategy should broaden UCPB's range of products and services, triple the bank's OFW business volume over the next two years and sustain a yearly 10 percent growth.

UCPB's OFW-related business presently accounts for only $132 million, mainly from foreign remittance.

Macadaeg said the new OFW banking unit would roll out its program by next month, initially targeting OFWs in the Middle East, its biggest OFW market in terms of volume.

"Once the Middle East program is in place and running, we will expand to other OFW markets in Asia and Europe," he said.

In line with this program, UCPB is enhancing its systems and service delivery infrastructure—its remittance processing system, electronic banking channels and its 178 branches nationwide.

"We will also increase our tie-ups with remittance firms both here and abroad and with nontraditional distribution channels such as pawnshops and convenience stores nationwide to broaden our reach," Macadaeg said.

UCPB's move is in line with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' call to develop a wide array of specialized loan, deposit and investment products for OFWs.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said: "The OFW market becomes a source of funds and at the same time user of the funds."

# Nokia expanding distribution channels

From page B2

seen to surge in popularity.

Quoting industry studies, the new country manager for Nokia (Philippines) Inc. put worldwide sales in 2006 at 1.02 billion units. He said the Finnish company stayed No. 1 among vendors, having its logo on one of every three phones sold in 2006. It was followed by Motorola Inc., Samsung Electronics Co., Sony Ericsson and LG Electronics Co.

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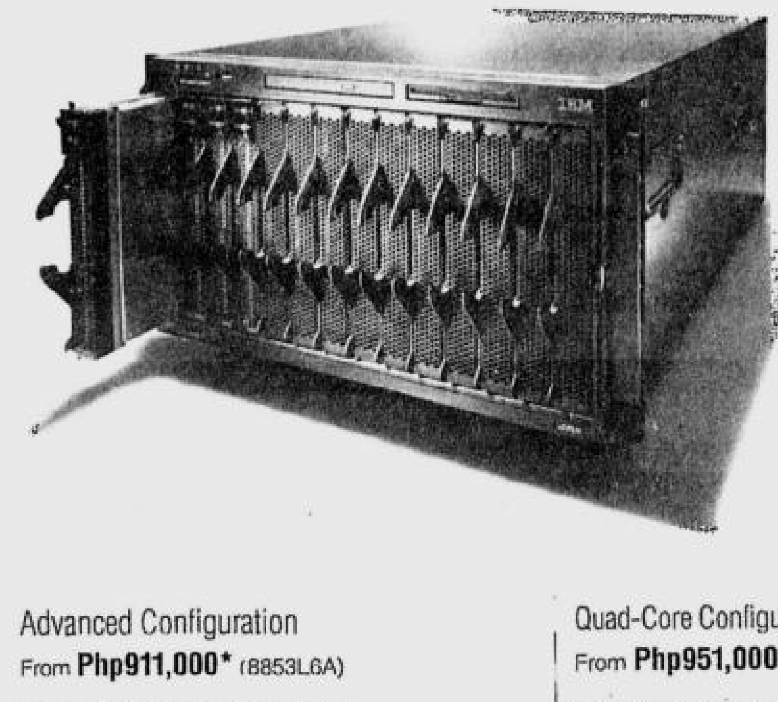

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Republic of the Philippines
**PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION**
PhilHealth Regional Office I
#23 M.H. del Pilar Street, Dagupan City 2400
PRO Healthline: (075) 515-3333, (075) 515-1111

### Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

### ACQUISITION OF SECURITY SERVICES & DRIVER/GUARDS FOR *PRO1*

***Corporate Budget for 2007***

1. The *Philippine Health Insurance Corporation*, through the *Corporate Budget for the year 2007* intends to apply the sum of ***TWO MILLION FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN THOUSAND PESOS (Php 2,413,000.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***ITB 2007-002***. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *PhilHealth Regional Office 1* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the ***acquisition of security services & driver/guards for PRO1***. Delivery of the GOODS is required ***fifteen (15) calendar days from*** *receipt of Notice of Award*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *PhilHealth Regional Office 1* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *Mondays thru Fridays, 8A.M.-5P.M.*
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (Php 2,500.00)*. The method of payment will be *cash or cheque*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *PhilHealth Regional Office 1 will* hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***April 18, 2007, Wednesday, 9:30AM*** at *Esperacion Bldg II., #23 M.H. Del Pilar St., Dagupan City, Pangasinan 2400.*
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***May 2, 2007, Wednesday 1:30PM***. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of a *Bidder's Bond in Cash, Manager's Check, Cashier's Check, certified check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit, bank guarantee, surety bond callable on demand issued by the Government Service Insurance System, or by surety or insurance companies duly accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, a combination of the foregoing or a foreign government guarantee as provided in an executive, bilateral or multilateral agreement, as may be required by the head of the procuring entity concerned.* ***Any surety or insurance company which is duly accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner will do, provided that it is not blacklisted by the said agency.*** *The Bid Security shall be equivalent to the following percentages of the approved budget for the contract to be bid: one percent (1%) if cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit; one and a half percent (1.5%) if bank guarantee; and two and a half (2.5%) if surety bond. The required minimum bid security, based on the above schedule, shall be stated in Philippine Peso in the bidding document. Bid securities shall be returned only after the bidder with the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid has signed the contract and furnished the Performance Security, but in no case later than the expiration of the bid security validity period indicated in the Instructions to Bidders.*

*The required amount of the above forms of security shall be in accordance with the following schedule:*

| Forms of Security | Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid |
|---|---|
| Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit | One percent (1%) [P24,130.00] |
| Bank guarantee | One and a half percent (1.5%) [P36,195.00] |
| Surety Bond | Two and a half percent (2.5%) [P60,325.00] |

***Performance Security.*** *To guarantee the faithful performance by the winning bidder of its obligations under the contract prepared in accordance with the bidding document, it shall post a Performance Security upon the signing of the contract. The Performance Security may be in the following forms: cash, certified check, cashier's / manager's check, bank draft / guarantee confirmed by a reputable local bank or in the case of a foreign winning bidder, bonded by a foreign bank; irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable letter of credit issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed or authenticated by a reputable local bank; surety bond callable upon demand issued by any reputable surety or insurance company; a combination of the foregoing; or a foreign government guarantee as provided in an executive, bilateral or multilateral agreement, as may be required by the head of the procuring entity concerned.*

*The required amount of the above forms of security shall be in accordance with the following schedule:*

| Forms of Security | Minimum Amount in % of Total Contract Price |
|---|---|
| Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit | Five percent (5%) |
| Bank guarantee | Ten percent (10%) |
| Surety Bond | Thirty percent (30%) |

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be on ***May 2, 2007, Wednesday 1:30PM*** at *Esperacion Bldg II.,#23 M.H. Del Pilar St., Dagupan City, Pangasinan 2400.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. ***NO BIDDER SHALL CONTACT THE BAC OR TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP FROM THE TIME OF THE BID OPENING TO THE TIME THE CONTRACT IS AWARDED.*** Any effort by the Bidder to influence the BAC in its evaluation, bid comparison or contract award decision shall result in the rejection of the bid, forfeiture of the bid bonds, disqualification of the Bidder in this bidding or blacklisting of the Bidder in any future bidding of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.
10. The *PhilHealth Regional Office 1 reserves* the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

PhilHealth Regional Office 1
**Dr. MARICAR M. ARZADON – BAC Chairperson**
Esperacion Bldg II.,#23 M.H. Del Pilar St.,
Dagupan City, Pangasinan 2400
Trunkline: (075)515-3333 local 141-142, 127, 197
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(Sgd.)**Dr. MARICAR M. ARZADON**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - March 21 & 28, 2007)

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## NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PALMERA HOMES, INCORPORATED** with office address **Las Piñas Business Center, National Road, Talon, Las Piñas City** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Developer of Mass Housing Project (Cerritos-Bacoor, Cavite)** with capacity of **383 units** with project/plant site located at **Barangay Molino, Bacoor, Cavite.**

Any person with valid objections on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration

(PDI - March 21, 2007)

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## ERRATUM

In the Supreme Court-Judicial and Bar Council Announcement for the nomination of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court published last March 20, 2007, the name of VILLARUS, Francisco Jr. H. should have spelled VILLARUZ, FRANCISCO, JR. H.

**Our apologies.**

---

Compagnie XY · Laissez porter

### FRENCH CIRCUS AT CCP

**The Company XY of France will perform on March 30, 2007, 8:00pm at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo (Main Theater). It is presented by the CCP and Alliance Francaise de Manille in cooperation with the Embassy of France in celebration of the French Spring in Manila 2007. Billed as Laissez Porter, the show features a French "new circus" that shows off the newest and most talented members of the genre. This show, full of the excitement of movement will be appreciated by children as young as five, and with its theme of travel and change, by the young at heart as old as our grandfathers. For more information, please call the CCP at 832-1125 loc. 1606 or 1607 or Alliance Francaise at 895-7585.**

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# OBITUARIES

## SALUD "Chiching" ROA STOOPS

*Beloved mother, wife, daughter and sister has passed on into the keeping of our Lord.*

*She died peacefully on March 20, 2007 at the age of 78.*

She spent her life building a home, loving her family and seeing the wonders of the world.

She is survived by her sons **Carl** and **Bessie**; **Ricky**; **Teddy** and daughter **Robin**; **Danny**; **John** and **Evangeline** with daughters **Stephanie** and **Adrienne**; and sister **Nenita** and the countless others who love her dearly.

Her wake will be held at Kamagong Chapel, La Funeraria Paz (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City from March 20 to March 22.

Afterwhich, her body will be brought home to Tuguegarao, Cagayan on March 23, 2007 and will lie in state at the Parish Pastoral Council.

Her entombment will be at the Sanctuary of Peace Memorial Park, Tuguegarao City on March 26, 2007.

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**MORE CLASSIFIED ADS**

| | |
|---|---|
| TRANSCO | B4 |
| DOLE-NCR | B6 |

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### Death Notice

**TEOFISTO MANSUETO**

*joined his Creator
on March 18, 2007 at the age of 81.*

His body lies in state at the chapel of Brgy. 604, Zone 60, Bagumbayan St., Sta. Mesa, Manila. Interment will be announced later.

---

*In Loving Memory*

**on the 3rd Death Anniversary of**

## CARLO PATRICCI D. PASCUAL

**March 18, 1977 – March 21, 2004**

Holy Masses will be offered at the following Churches :

| | |
|---|---|
| **Carmelite Monastery**, Sto. Domingo, Angeles City | 6:00 a.m. |
| **Sacred Heart Chapel**, Sto. Domingo, Angeles City | 6:00 a.m |
| **Carmel of St. Therese of The Child Jesus** Gilmore St., Quezon City | 6:30 a.m. |
| **St. Padre Pio Parish**, San Jose, Camarines Sur | 6:30 a.m. |
| **Our Lady of Miraculous Medal**, Proj. 4, Quezon City | 6:30 a.m. |
| **San Sebastian Cathedral**, Tarlac City | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Immaculate Concepcion Parish Church**, Balibago, Angeles City | 7:00 a.m. |
| **Holy Rosary Parish**, Sto. Rosario, Angeles City | 8:30 a.m. |
| **Shrine of Our Lady Of Manaoag**, Pangasinan | 10:00 a.m. |
| **St. Joseph the Worker Parish**, Echague, Isabela | 4:00 p.m. |
| **Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Chapel**, Greenhills, San Juan | 5:15 p.m. |
| **Christ the King Parish**, Greenmeadows, Quezon City | 6:00 p.m. |
| **St. Jude Parish**, San Miguel, Manila | 6:00 p.m. |
| **National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Dao St., Makati City | 6:00 p.m. |
| **San Sebastian Cathedral**, CM Recto, Manila | 6:00 p.m. |
| **Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish**, Forbes Park, Makati City | 6:00 p.m. |
| **Sanctuario de San Jose**, Greenhills, San Juan | 6:15 p.m. |

His family and relatives request the readers, specially the lives of those he had touched, to pray for the repose of his soul.

---

**SONLIE** *International, Inc.*

announces the demise of

## Eduardo T. Alonzo

on March 19, 2007

father of its President, **Tecson H. Alonzo**

His remains lie in state at Chapel 7 and 8 of the Mortuary and Crematory of The Heritage Park.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 24, 2007 at 1pm at the Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Mortuary and Crematory at THE HERITAGE PARK

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**"Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to me."**
**(Psalm 116:7)**

---

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# RP's BPO star seen to be on the wane

## US firm says RP fell several notches in 2007 index from 8th place in '06

By Ronnel W. Domingo

BUSINESS PROCESS OUTsourcing "hotspots" like the Philippines must build up their pool of available talents and skills and improve industry regulations as the cost advantage for offshoring services from developed countries is waning, according to a Chicago-based global management consulting firm.

Results of the latest annual survey of AT Kearney released last week showed that, while total compensation costs for sample positions like IT programmers or call center representatives rose by 5 percent to 10 percent in most developed countries, average wages for similar positions in the Philippines went up by as much as 30 percent in US dollar terms.

Dubbed "2007 Global Services Location Index," the study that is based on data culled in 2006 ranks offshore business process outsourcing locations—covering 50 countries worldwide—in terms of financial attractiveness, people skills and business environment.

The Philippines "surprisingly dropped several places" in the 2007 Index from eighth place in 2006, trailing India, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Brazil, Indonesia and Chile, in that order.

Still, the poll showed that the Philippines "remained one of the lowest wage locations and now offers the lowest telecom costs of any country in the Index."

Comparative labor cost changes between developed and developing countries were attributed partly to accelerating wages and currency appreciation in offshore hotspots as well as downward pressure on wages in impacted sectors in developed countries.

At the same time, AT Kearney said that the cost competitiveness of key emerging markets was expected to remain for another 20 years as they have continued to improve their attractiveness in terms of access to talent, industry experience, quality certifications and their regulatory environment.

Paul Laudicina, AT Kearney managing officer and chair, said in a statement that what was most striking about this year's Index was how the relative cost advantage of the leading offshore destinations declined almost universally, while their scores for people skills and business environment rose significantly.

"These findings reinforce the message that corporations making global location decisions should focus less on short-term cost considerations, and more on long-term projections of talent supply and operating conditions," Laudicina said.

The findings also sent a message to policy-makers in both developed and developing countries that the key to maintaining and enhancing long-term competitiveness lies in skills development, infrastructure investment and the regulatory environment, not in attempts to control wages, he said.

# Cebu Pacific offers ₱888 fare

CEBU PACIFIC WILL START flying a direct service from Manila to Taipei, Taiwan starting June 13, with a special introductory offer of only P888 one-way.

The Taipei seat sale will run from March 21 to 27. Fare is exclusive of surcharges and government tax.

Cebu Pacific's brand new Airbus A320 aircraft will be used for the daily Manila-Taipei service. The flight departs from Manila at 11:10 a.m., arriving in Taipei at 1:10 p.m. Then it leaves Taipei at 1:55 p.m. and arrives in Manila at 3:55 p.m.

The airline will operate from the Chang Kai Shek International Airport in Taipei.

"We hope that, with the opening of this new destination, we will further encourage travel for both leisure and business sectors," said Lance Gokongwei, Cebu Pacific president and CEO.

# Consunjis infuse ₱1B in DMCI

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CONSTRUCTION GIANT DMCI HOLDINGS Inc. will receive P1.16 billion in fresh cash infusion from the Consunji family's private investment firm Dacon Corp.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday, DMCI finance officer Aldric Borlaza said Dacon would subscribe to a total of 168 million common shares of the company, which would be issued out of DMCI's unissued capital stock.

The shares were bought at P6.70, P7 and P7.51 a share.

DMCI will use Dacon's investment to finance its expansion in the water sector, through Maynilad Water Services Inc., and power sector.

Last month, the Consunjis sold roughly P560 million worth of shares in DMCI for debt repayment.

DMCI plans to raise $50 million within the year to retire P1.5 billion in debt acquired for the purchase of Maynilad, and for working capital, sources earlier said.

DMCI disclosed that its president Isidro A. Consunji and treasurer Ma. Edwina C. Laperal sold a combined 50.47 million shares out of the 80 million, worth P353.3 million to clients of stockbroker Deutsche Regis Partners Inc.

The shares were then priced at P7 a share.

# Alaska-Hershey agreement ends on dry note

PROCESSED MILK DISTRIBUTOR ALASKA Milk Corp. yesterday said that its license agreement with American chocolate and candy giant Hershey Foods Corp. has ended and would no longer be renewed.

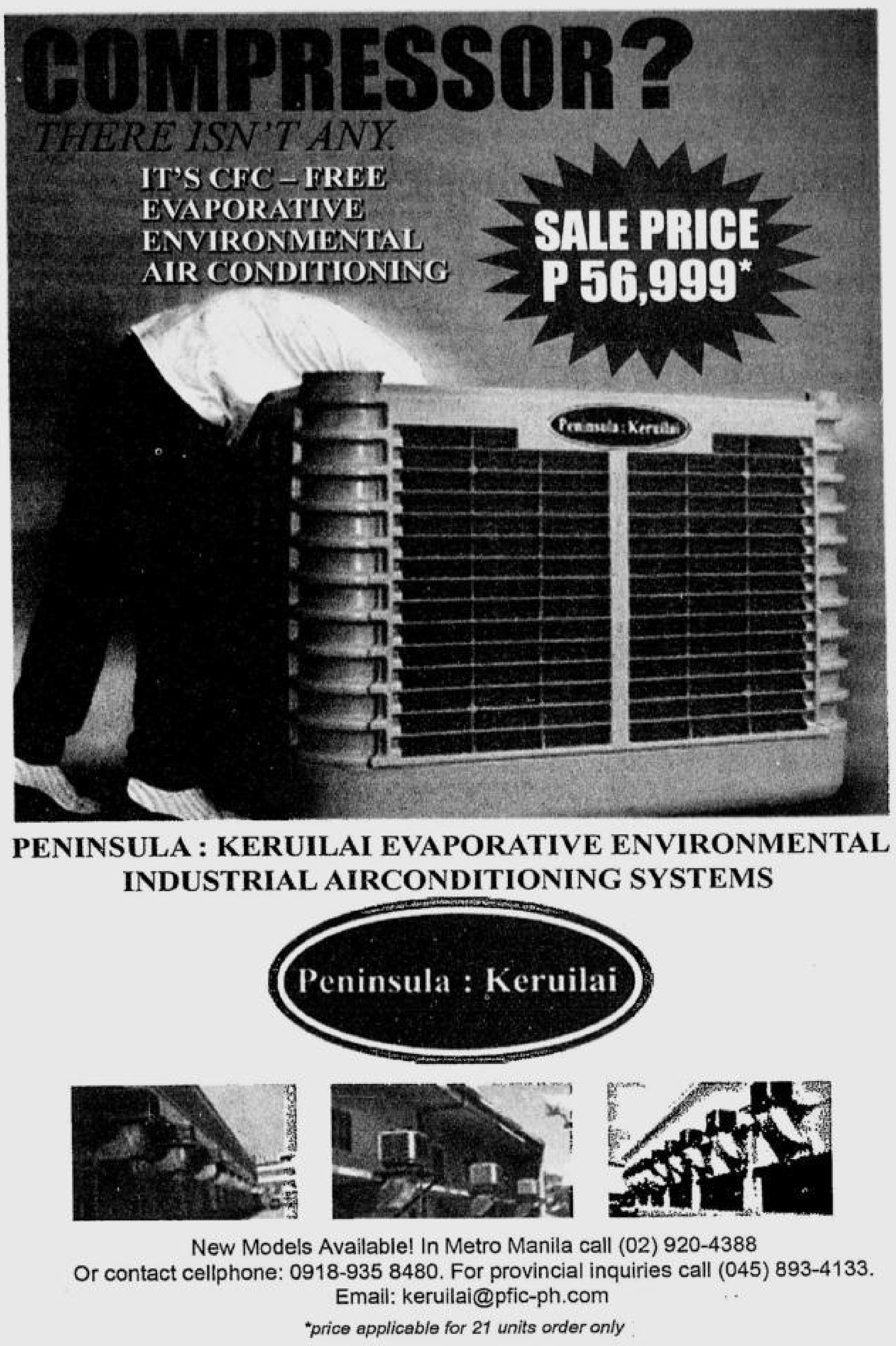
Alaska secured a license agreement with Hershey in 2003, acquiring the exclusive license to manufacture and sell Hershey's ready-to-drink chocolate milk drink products in the Philippines.

No explanation was provided in the company's disclosure.

Sources however said Alaska and Hershey reached a mutual agreement after noting that the "business was not profitable."

Alaska earlier reported its net income hit P404 million in 2006, up 34 percent than the P301 million it posted the previous year.

But retail grocery consumption of milk products in 2006 declined 11 percent year on year. The market's contraction was attributed to the slowdown in consumer spending in the first half, due to the expanded value added tax law and the rise in oil prices which reduced consumers' purchasing power. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*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# BUSINESS

# RP urged to offer tax rebate

## Foreign donors air concern over homemakers' welfare

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

THE PHILIPPINES MUST REVISE ITS TAX SYSTEM to offer tax rebates for home-bound spouses, mostly housewives in low-income households, in order to recognize the work they put in—for which they get no pay—such as childcare, agricultural production, housework and community volunteerism.

This proposal came from the Official Development Assistance-Gender and Development Network (ODA-GAD), a network of big foreign donors monitoring gender equality in public finance, such as the Asian Development Bank, the European Commission, the World Bank and various units of the United Nations.

The development agencies of Canada, New Zealand, Sweden and the USA are likewise part of the ODA-GAD network.

"Strengthening tax collection was one of the measures implemented by the government to achieve macroeconomic stability," the network said in a paper submitted to economic managers. "The present tax system, however, fails to recognize the unpaid productive work performed by home-bound spouses."

While the unpaid work would partly "fund" or "subsidize" the government's public programs, ODA-GAD said they remained unrecognized in fiscal policy-making.

Based on local labor statistics, 56 percent of unpaid family workers are women.

"With the decrease of family income in real terms, tax burdens further add pressure to the already limited resources of poor households," the network said.

Aside from considering tax rebates for unpaid family workers, the ODA-GAD network said the government must increase households' access to affordable and basic social services through additional social infrastructure.

On public spending, the network cited the need for targeted public expenditures to meet the differentiated needs of men and women.

For instance, the donors said, working women are further burdened by the lack of childcare facilities. They also said the government was not spending enough for contraceptives, transferring the burden to local government units.

"To date, only 60 percent of provinces and one-third of all municipalities had begun implementing the contraceptive self-reliance program at varying stages," the network said.

They warned that lack of support for this population control program would mean an increase in unplanned pregnancies, induced abortion and higher maternal and child mortality particularly among the poor.

Lastly, the network backed debt-swap arrangements where the Philippines and its creditor country could agree on the loan percentage that could be converted for development projects related to the MDG (the UN's Millennium Development Goal).

They also advocated increased ODA investments on health, education and social services.

# In RP, good agri practices not good enough, says DA exec

**By Delmar Carino**
*Inquirer Northern Luzon*

TAGAYTAY CITY—THE COUNTRY IS EATING the dust of its Southeast Asian neighbors in terms of good agricultural practices (GAP), according to a top official of the Department of Agriculture.

"We are behind, and we really are lagging," said Gilberto Layese, director of the DA's Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Products Standards, in his speech before delegates to the 5th National Vegetable Congress here.

Layese said that the DA launched the GAP program in 2005 but up until now, only two farms in Luzon have applied for certification.

This development, he said, has stalled the country's competitiveness in international trade, where market and consumer demands have rapidly grown in quality over the past few years.

As a result, Philippine vegetables and other crops are difficult to export, particularly now that there are also product standards imposed on member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO), he said.

He said the country's exports of vegetables have paled in comparison to the export volumes of Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The three countries have set up their respective GAP accreditation systems.

He said GAP is a farming process that addresses the environmental, economic and social sustainability of agriculture, from production to post-harvest activities, which results in the production of safe and healthy food.

Asked to explain why the country was slow to adopting GAP in its farms, Layese cited three reasons: most farms in the country are small landholdings; farmers fail to appreciate GAP benefits because most of them have low educational attainment, and farmers can sell their harvests with or without GAP accreditation.

But Layese said the country's farmers must adjust to GAP if they want their products to become globally competitive.

In fact, the development of corporate farming and contract growing between high end users and farmers was spurred by GAP demands, he said.

He cited the contracts entered into by Dole Philippines and Benguet farmers for the supply of high value crops such as broccoli, pepper and cauliflower.

He said Dole would not have risked asking for the produce of the farmers if the multinational firm was not convinced that they were into GAP.

He said the DA has developed a system to accredit farms that practice GAP in the country.

The country's GAP program was launched in August 2005.

But GAP remained a gap in the development of the country's agriculture since only a few really appreciated what it meant to have a GAP accreditation, Layese said.

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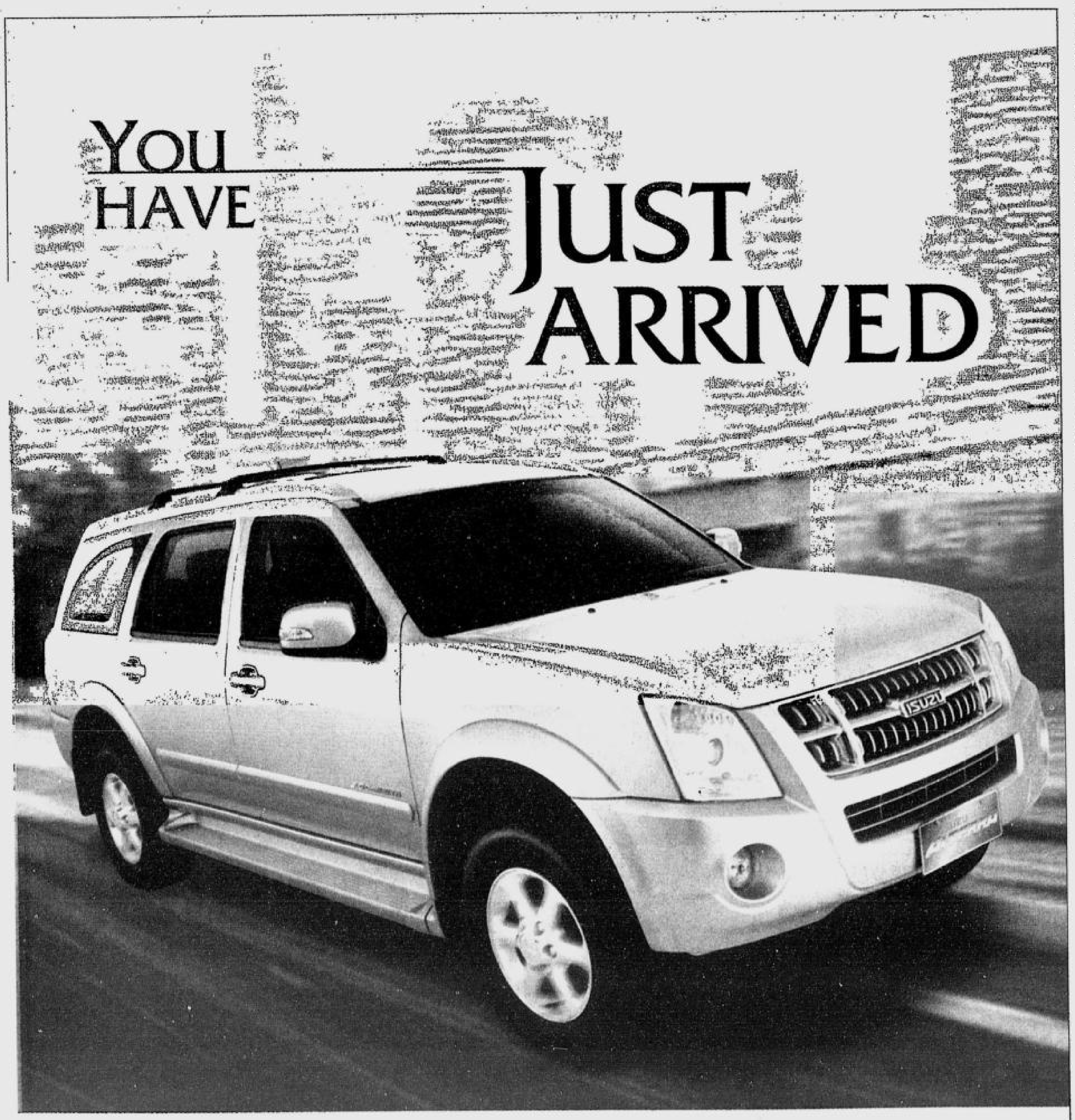

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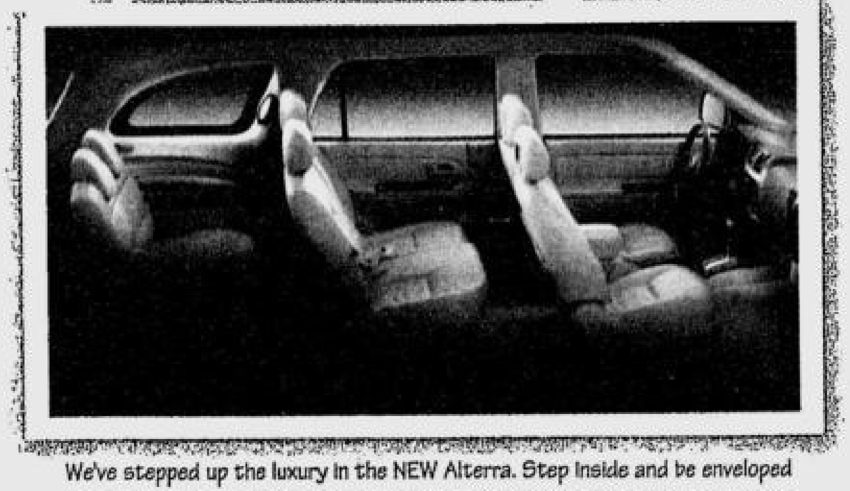

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MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Text us your feedback: inquirer mtr name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

# Hubby, please don't buy her a Mercedes sports car

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

THE MERCEDES-BENZ B170 is the most preferred Benz model in the country, if you ask its women buyers and as shown by data from CATS Motors Philippines, the exclusive distributor of Mercedes-Benz vehicles in the country. Behind the B170 in the order of preference are the C 180 with 16 percent and the E 200 and 280, both with 14 percent.

The B170 is the "do-it-all" Benz-mobile because of its spacious interior (INQUIRER Motoring loaded it with three bikes inside), practical and safety features (the "sandwich" concept provides a higher seating design and double floor, which allows the engine and transmission to slide away from the passengers in a serious collision).

The B170 somehow "grew" on its market over the years. It used to be just fifth in 2005 with only 13 percent of the market cornered. Back then, it was the C180, E200 and the SLK200 that the ladies used to swoon over with 17 percent of the market share.

## Tribute to women

So, what a difference a couple of years make! And since March is women's month, the Mercedes-Benz showroom of CATS at The Fort in Makati City fittingly held a tribute to women just recently and invited women Benz buyers, which numbered 134.

CATS people said Mercedes-Benz recognizes this change in preference among a growing number of female customers who walked into its showrooms.

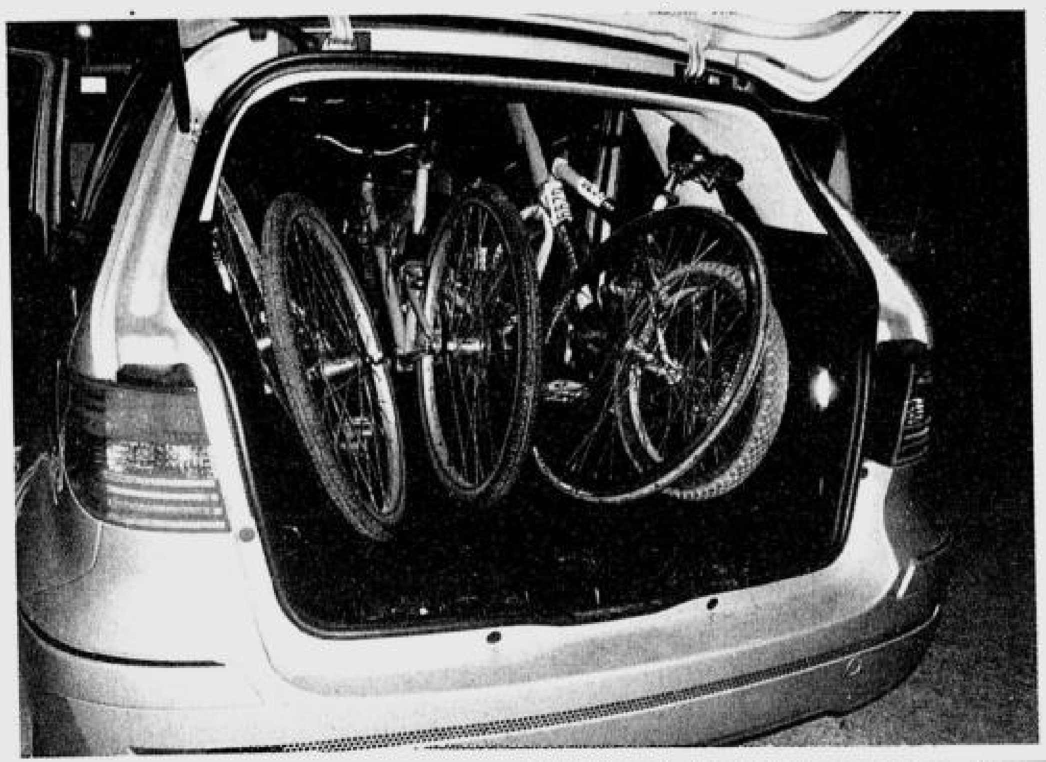
Apple Ting, Mercedes-Benz's marketing manager, said the MB Women's Day, the first of its kind in the Philippines, was an opportunity to pay tribute to the empowered woman of today who knows exactly what she wants. MB Women's Day also presents Mercedes-Benz the best opportunity to present products that can offer answers to women's various automotive needs.

## Woman behind the wheels

Many may not realize it, but it was a woman who was the driving force behind the invention of the first automobile. Bertha Benz gave husband Karl that impetus to pursue his dream of creating a "horseless carriage" to transport people.

The spirit of Bertha is in every woman, the people at Mercedes-Benz say. And no matter what personality a lady may embody, a Mercedes-Benz vehicle fits her bill.

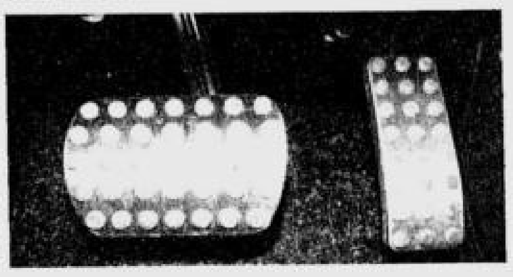
And every woman, they attest, has found many agreeable qualities with the multitasker of a vehicle called the B170.



WOULD you believe this sports tourer could fit in three bikes? Check the specs, go to showrooms and test drive for yourself.

Here's why: More than a third of women Benz buyers prefer the 'do-it-all' capabilities of the B170

PLEASE don't expect whiplashing acceleration on the B170 but this do-it-all mobile will sweep women off their feet



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MYRA'S do-it-all B200 is her 'ambulance' for animals

# *Animal lover's 'pet carriage' an MB B200*

Text and photo by Tessa R. Salazar

A MERCEDES-BENZ B200 LITErally brought out the animal (or animals) in Myra Carmelita A. Cruz.

A lawyer by profession, Myra is also a fervent advocate of animal rights and welfare. In her care are 49 cats, six dogs, a parrot, a pair of love birds, a fish and two turtles.

She sees the Mercedes-Benz B200 as the only vehicle that can comfortably carry her pets. Not all of them at once, of course.

"Every week some pets have to be vaccinated or brought to the vet. The B200's trunk area is not closed, which becomes very convenient for me to put my pets there and keep them comfortable. Sedans are not roomy and comfortable enough for them."

Myra first crossed paths with the Mercedes-Benz B Class more than a month ago when she attended a function at the CATS showroom. She decided to take a look at all the MB models in the showroom.

## Mini-SUV

"I liked the B-Class because it's a mini-SUV yet it's still easy to enter into. It's high enough not to be affected by floods. It's astonishingly roomy and I like the way the seats fold back. We needed a van at home—a small one—and I felt that the B200 was a very good choice," she explained.

Cruz test-drove a unit right

ANIMAL/ B2-2

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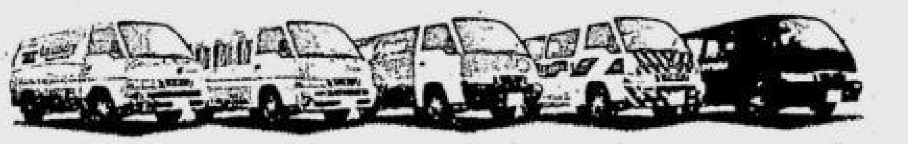

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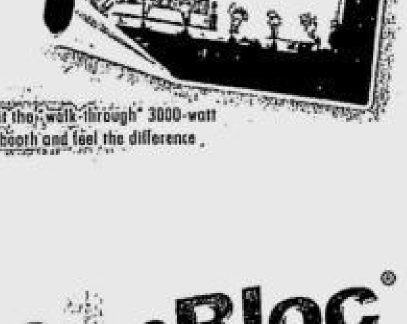

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# More on lights that blind

ON THE ROAD

*Aida Sevilla-Mendoza*

LAST WEEK, AUTOMOBILE ASsociation Philippines (AAP) president Gus Lagman received an e-mail from Carlos P. Reyes, MD that is worth publishing here in the interest of road safety. Slightly edited, here is Dr. Reyes' e-mail:

"Have you been noticing when driving at night that more and more drivers of oncoming vehicles no longer dim their bright headlamps? And more and more of these drivers are sporting the new super-bright bluish-white Xenon lamps, even fitting their fog lamps with blinding light, sacrificing road safety.

"Why is this so? Is it because they want people to notice they have the latest unapproved technology with which to show off? Have these lamps been approved by the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile) for road use? I notice more and more owners/drivers of SUVs (sport utility vehicles) use these blinding lights with impunity and there is no officer of the law present (the MMDA shuts down after 5 p.m.) to restrict the use of non-approved headlamps.

## Spectrum

"The human eye responds to the part of spectrum of visible light within the range of 400-700 nano meters (nm) with the sensitivity to blue falling off at around 550 nm but increases its sensitivity to green and red, peaking until 650 nm. Which is probably why our street lamps are lemon-yellow or orange in color. Is it because our eyes, adapted to the dark, have an affinity to this part of spectrum of visible light,' increasing its visibility at night?

"Xenon lamps have a different spectrum, certainly quite different from the yellowish emission of tungsten or tungsten-halogen lamps which are more pleasant to the eye. When our retinas are exposed to dim light, the layer of rods (in the middle layer of the retina) is activated while our pupils dilate to admit more light. Cones are active in bright-adapted vision and when our pupils are constricted.

"The layer of rods and cones in our retinas enable us to see the visible spectrum of light and to see the colors interpreted by our visual cortex. Viewed with Xenon lamps, reflected light will appear dim because our eyes are not too sensitive to the bluish light they emit and could explain why drivers using them keep their intensity highest to compensate for the lack of sensitivity of their eyes.

## Headlamp war

"... I hope more concerned motorists and law enforcers address this issue that could erupt into an all-around headlamp war with dire consequences on the streets," Dr. Reyes concludes.

Regarding Dr. Reyes' question whether the FIA has approved the use of Xenon headlamps on the road, AAP vice president Johnny Angeles cited instead the 1968 Vienna Conventions of the United Nations on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals, respectively. Before 1968, the Philippine Congress had approved Republic Act 4136 or the Land Transportation and Traffic Code, consolidating all traffic rules and replacing the Motor Vehicles Office with the Land Transportation Commission. In 1973, President Marcos ratified the Vienna Conventions via Presidential Decree 297 and made it part of the Land Transportation and Traffic Code.

In those days, although there were no bluish-white Xenon headlamps yet, RA 4136 was clear about headlights: "Every motor vehicle of more than one meter of projected width, while in use on any public highway shall bear two headlights, one on each side, with white or yellowish light visible from the front. . . " (underscoring supplied.) Furthermore, "All motor vehicles shall be equipped with devices for varying the intensity of light, and the driver must dim the headings or tilt the beams downward whenever the vehicle is being operated on well-lighted streets within the limits of cities, municipalities and thickly populated barrios or districts, or whenever such vehicle meets another vehicle on any public highway." (underscoring supplied)

## Glare or dazzle

In addition, RA 4136 provides that "Every motor vehicle other than a motorcycle without sidecar shall be equipped with two white position (side) lights at the front. These lights shall be clearly visible at night time in clear weather at a distance of 150 m (500 feet) from the front of the vehicle without causing any glare or dazzle to other road users." (underscoring supplied)

Regarding fog lights, a Land Transportation Office (LTO) Memorandum attached as Presidential Decree 96 Clarification to RA 4136 stipulates that "Only two fog lights are allowed up front a level or lower than the headlights with maximum of 100 watts power each for use in mountainous and foggy areas. These shall be covered when the vehicle is operating in well-lighted areas where visibility is far and wide." (underscoring supplied)

So, RA 4136 is clear about glaring headlights and using fog lights while driving in well-lighted areas. For the sake of road safety, the LTO and other traffic law enforcers should strictly implement the laws against lights that blind.

* * *

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### IF PRODUCT DESIGN AWARD 2007

## *Gold goes to the new BMW 3 Series Coupé*

THE BMW GROUP IS RECEIVing three Awards from Industrie Forum Design in Hanover (iF), Germany, this year for the outstanding design of its products. So from now on the new BMW 3 Series Coupé and the new BMW K 1200 GT and BMW F 800 S motorcycles will proudly bear the coveted iF Label awarded by the world-famous institute.

In addition, the BMW 3 Series Coupé is receiving one of the particularly exclusive iF Gold Awards, the most supreme special prize awarded by the international jury in the iF Product Design Awards.

The new BMW 3 Series Coupé is one of the most respected and admired new models introduced in the international automobile market in recent months. Through its body design alone, this two-door expresses its dynamic driving potential in a particularly elegant manner.

### Driving experience

Like every BMW, the new BMW 3 Series Coupé, through its outstanding design, embodies the unique driving experience this model offers the driver and his passengers at very first sight. Hence, the new BMW 3 Series Coupé is a particularly authentic representative of the sports coupé segment. From the proportions typical of BMW with the long engine compartment lid visualizing the powerful heart of the coupé through the long wheelbase of the car and the passenger cell moved far to the rear, all the way to the flowing roofline with the slender windows below, the BMW 3 Series Coupé lives out its sporting ambitions in every respect and in every feature of its design.

### Unique representation

Following BMW's design strategy, the BMW 3 Series Coupé offers a truly unique interpretation of the convex and concave surfaces so typical of a coupé. Over and above the sporting and low-slung silhouette, the entire body stands out through a touch of lightness promising supreme dynamism of the highest standard. The stretched and sleek dynamism of the car's exterior design is then continued harmoniously into the interior, both the sporting and elegant design of the inner door panels and the sweeping flow of the center console guiding the beholder's view in the direction of travel, thus supporting the experience of outstanding sportiness within the interior. And with the rear seats being separated by the center console, the new BMW 3 Series Coupé boasts another feature typical of a sporting coupé.

# Animal lover's 'pet carriage' an MB B200

From page B2-1

away and found that she liked the way the car handled, its ample air-conditioning system, and how the cushions and shock-absorbing systems absorbed bumps "very well."

Even with a driver and two or three passengers, the trunk space, she said, could carry two large suitcases and two large carry-ons. It had more trunk space than a sedan. And when the seats are folded flat, the carrying capacity is increased much more significantly.

"For a utility vehicle with that size, it's immensely practical. And if you think of value for money, a Benz depreciates very gradually."

Myra cited a Benz model owned by her friend. "She was able to sell the car at almost the same price that she bought it."

Unmarried and with no children of her own (at least of the human kind), she still describes her abode in San Juan as "a happy home." She wouldn't give up any of her pets for adoption because, she explained, she had a big house with five nannies for the animals.

## Growing with Benzes

The love for Benzes—and animals—runs in her family. Myra recalls that she grew up with Benzes. Her parents—both Benz loyalists—raised her and her sister to also be compassionate to animals.

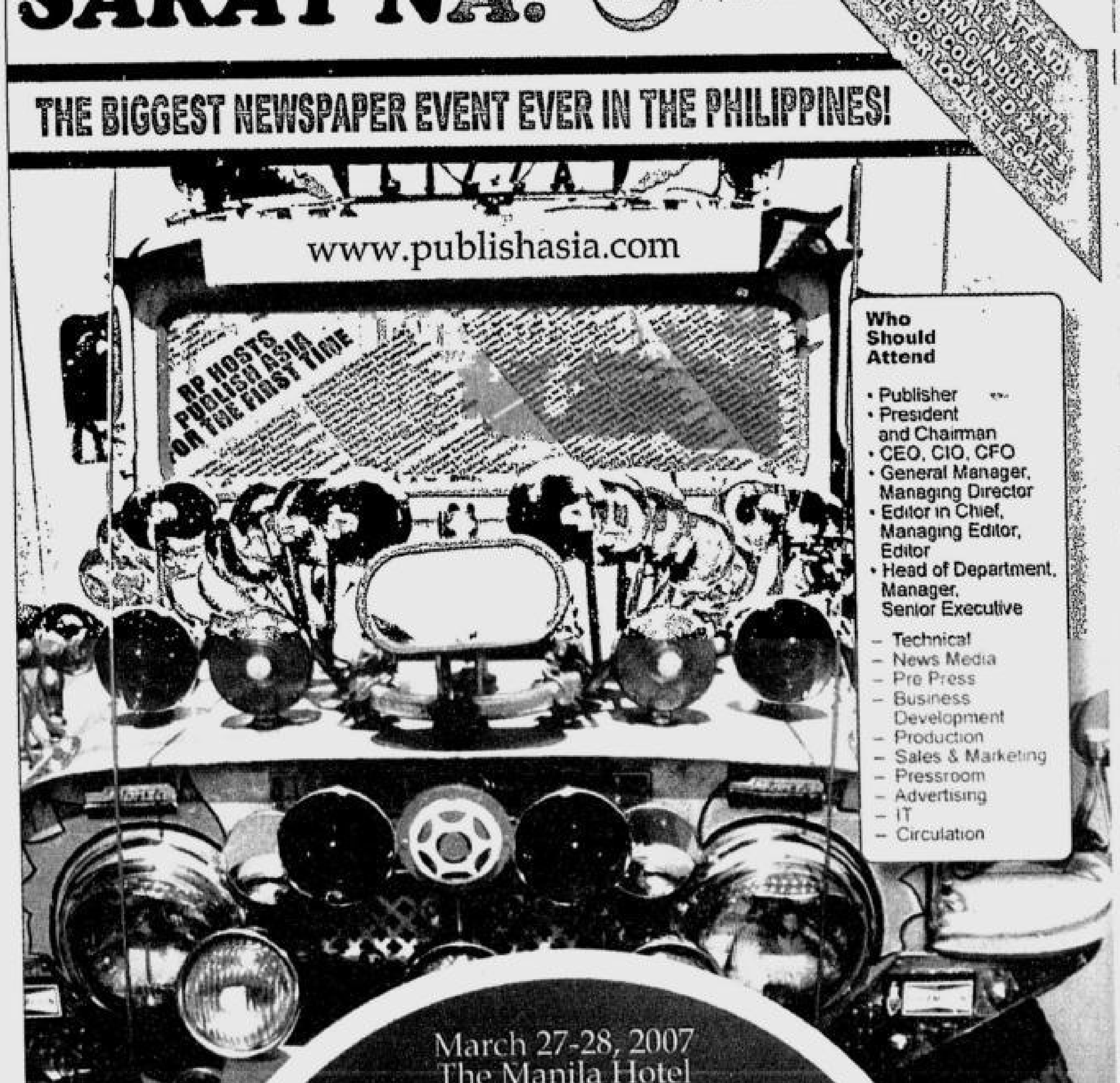
Myra would develop the habit of plucking cats out of the streets, a penchant she said earned her a feature spot in a GMA-7 pet show twice.

She says members of her household share her passion for animals. They know that the animals have to be neutered or spayed to keep them from unnecessarily multiplying. They also have themselves rescued stray animals.

In Myra's house, the animals are treated like royalty, and it shows in the healthy sheen of their fur. INQUIRER Motoring was invited in and this writer personally met many of the felines, including one named Benz (of course), Apple, Garfield, Pebbles, Butchoy, Onix, Hershey and Alex. They could have been mistaken for foreign breeds, but Myra stresses all of these cats were once scrawny "pusakals."

"Any animal showered with love and compassion would look better. If you feed them like people, they will respond like people."

Myra's own versatile B200 of a beast can expect the same treatment, no less.



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•Harnessing new technology to re-invent and re-structure
•Continuing to ensure high ethical standards and commitment to quality
*Murdoch MacLennan, CEO, Telegraph Media Group United Kingdom*
Networking Break, Expo Visit
Session 1 Business and Strategy
Moderator David O Valdes, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Philippine Daily Inquirer Philippines
A Strategy for Integration
•Synergies through coordination and cooperation of business areas•Cross promotional efforts
•Digital strategy exploiting potential niches via community publications
*David O. Valdes, Executive Vice President andChief Operating Officer, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippines*
Parallel Session 1
Semi-Commercial Printing
Entering the Semi-Commercial Market
•Retro fitting presses
•Practical insights
Moderator *Manfred Werfel, Research Director and Deputy CEO Ifra, Germany*
An interactive panel discussion with the publishing community comprising of publishers, industry vendors and end users will be held at the end of the session.
Investment Models - CASH daily
•How the next generation of customers are presenting the media industry with new challenges
•First results after launching a world-premiere cross-media product
•CASH daily, the information platform for those interested in business
*Thomas Trueb Member of the Group Management Ringier, Switzerland*
Lunch, Expo Visit
Strategy for Staying Ahead: Product Diversification
•Why it makes sense to widen your portfolio of products
•Attracting new audiences
•Functioning business models
*Siddharth Kothari, Director, Rajasthan Patrika India*
Parallel Session 2
Distribution Realities of Asia
Overview of challenges for Distribution and Circulation Management
•What are the options to address these challenges
•How can newspaper industry collectively accelerate transition from where they are today to where they should be
Case study - Magic of Beer Distribution
Panel discussion of Circulation and Distribution
Moderator **Cyril Pereira** *Principal, Telesis Consulting Limited,Hong Kong*
A Strategy for Integrated Newsrooms
•Why publishers need to integrate•The challenges to overcome
•The convergence project at The Daily Telegraph
*Dr. Dietmar Schantin, Director of Newsplex, Ifra, Germany*
Networking Break, Expo Visit
Session 2 Digital Media
Launching a Community Site
•How to develop and market community sites
•Managing communities
•Creating synergies among other news channels
*Chew V. Ming Executive Content Producer STOMP Singapore Press Holdings, Singapore*
Parallel Session 3
Change Management in the Newsroom
•The situation of change and re-organisation in newsrooms today
•How the success of re-organisation depends on good change management
•Examples of best practice and worst practice of change management in the newsroom
•Methods and tips to help increase acceptance of change
*Sarah Schantin Williams, Associate Consultant Ifra Newsplex, Germany*
Search Engines Strategies for Newspapers
•New commercial and editorial arenas opened by search for an online news organization
•What search engines can tell you about your own site and your own readers
•Search engine optimization
*Jo Christian Oterhals Head of Development VG Multimedia, Norway*
Mobile Publishing
•'Made for Mobile' content: How the mobile customer is seeking exclusive differentiated content on his handset
•Moving from a product-centric thought process to a consumer-centric thought process
•Looking through the prism of a newspaper-driven media house
*Saurav Sen, Head of Business - Telecoms &Internet, ABP Pvt Ltd, India*
Closing Comments of first day
Welcome Dinner
Wednesday, 28 March 2007
Moderator Jim Chisholm, Joint Principal, iMedia, France
Session 3 Advertising Strategies
Building Across Media Advertising Strategies
•How to structure sales strategy
•Developing packages
•Classifieds strategy
*Jim Chisholm Joint Principal iMedia, France*
Parallel Session 1
Workflow Management -Production, Editorial, Advertising
•Reducing the cost of operations
•Minimizing manpower
•Reducing time to press
•Facilitating the entire operation with integrated solutions
Moderator *Manfred Werfel, Research Director and DeputyCEO, Ifra, Germany*
An interactive panel discussion with the publishing community comprising of publishers, industry vendors and end users will be held at the end of the session.
Multi-Media Sales Model
•How to create successful sales teams
•Print/online classified strategies
•How to reward staff
*Robert C. Granfeldt, Vice President Consulting Morris DigitalWorks, USA*
The Google Economy
•How publishers can partner with Google to generate new revenue streams
*Speaker to be confirmed*
Networking Break, Expo Visit
Online Classifieds- Spourders.nl
•Launching an online classifieds site in a highly competitive market
•Practical steps on how to develop a site
•Challenges for the future
*Leon Kramer Marketing Manager, Speurders.nl The Netherlands*
Panel Discussion:Competing for the Advertisers' Budget
•At a time when advertiser across the world are reviewing their marketing strategies, shifting revenues from traditional media and developing new strategies for attracting and retaining consumers, this session examines the views of key decision makers in marketing and outlines how you can increase your share of the advertisers' budget
*Speakers to be confirmed*
Lunch, Expo Visit
Session 4 Circulation, Readership and Audience
Sessions hosted by **Inma**
The Brand Positioning of The Times of India
•Applying brand management principles to aproduct portfolio
•Capitalizing on a growth market to win market share
*Ravi Dhariwal, Executive Director, The Times ofIndia India*
Parallel Session 2
Waste Management
•Key performance indicators for newspapers
•What should be measured and what results can be achieved
*Speaker to be confirmed*
Networking Break, Expo Visit
Strategy Devolopment of Korea SportsNewpapers - IS
•How IS (sister newspaper of JoongAng Ilbo) worked out operational and restructuring strategies
•Pursued differentiation strategies
*Changhee Park, Director/Strategic PlanningOffice, JoongAng Ilbo, Seoul, South Korea*
Eyeballs and Audiences: Ideas and TrendsWorldwide
•Tap into the unique 'INMA Conversation' worldwide and learn about the best ideas to grow newspaper circulation, readership and audience
•Harvest the best examples of product, price and promotion in this global tour de force presentation
*Earl J. Wilkinson, Executive Director, INMA, USA*
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Back by popular requests, take fulladvantage of the **Publish Asia 2007** Golf Tournament to network with industry leaders head at one of the finest golf courses in Manila on March 29, Thursday

**A Welcome Dinner reception** will be hosted by Manila Bulletin on the evening of Tuesday 27 March from 18:00hrs onwards. All delegates are invited for a guided plant tour at Manila Bulletin on the same evening.

On Wednesday 28 March The Philippine Department of Tourism and the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation hosts a Philippine Cocktails at the Puerta Real in the Old Walled City of Manila, featuring cultural and folk presentations.

**The 6th Annual Asia Media Awards Gala Dinner** will also be on **Wednesday, 28 March** at the closing finale of the event. All the evening functions require RSVP. More information will be made available on www.publishasia.com

Please note: Ifra Asia reserves the right to alter the program as necessary. Information provided as accurate as possible at the time of printing Please check www.publishasia.com for regular program updates

# Do we still need Coty?

## MY DRIFT

### *Andre Palma*

AROUND THIS TIME EVERY year, I find myself with a pronounced case of gastric butterflies. In the weeks after the annual Car of the Year (Coty) Awards night, leading up to the Manila Motor show, it seems that I just can't hold down the contents of my stomach. Why, you may ask is there undue apprehension at this particular time? Honestly, it is because I keep wondering if Coty has outlived its usefulness and feasibility.

An unbelievable amount of time and effort goes into the yearly production that the Car of the Year Award. Months of conferring, testing and disagreement are what have made up each of the last three years. Personal sacrifice is what fuels this organization, and quite a few have decided that enough is enough.

The process of organizing, mobilizing and pacifying members would take its toll on even the most patient and understanding. Mother Teresa would have a tough time dealing with the more vocal of our members. We are not even talking of those who are just plain insidious or insolent.

## Resounding success

On the surface, it is easy to consider this year was another resounding success. The categories were mostly taken by the deserved class winners, a clear indication that the testing procedure and survey tools are still, for the large part, spot on. There were more than a few surprises, to be polite, but I'm sure there isn't anything that a simple explanation of the SGV audit will not clarify beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Yes, I will be the first to admit that I have been an inactive member of the award-giving body; that I was seldom physically present at meetings and at the testing sessions. What right then, many of this year's starring members will likely ask, do I have to question the current intent and purpose of the organization.

## Lingering concern

I have no right really; it's just there's a lingering concern about it. When you see something through birth, infancy and its first steps it is hard to completely sever the ties that bond. Then like a child reaching its teen years one has to start letting go. The intent and purpose of Coty is what the current board makes it to be, and that is all up to their individual agendas.

Before I stir up an absolute asp's nest of motoring hacks, let me again clarify my stand. All that is being asked is this, "Is Coty still relevant?"

Simple math will answer that. Can someone please dig up the sales information of the winners of the past two years? Does winning Coty translate into better market acceptance? Is there a marked increase in public confidence about the products that won their categories? Some manufacturers are completely unsupportive, at one time or another, but that does not mean their products don't keep selling. It is time for a reality check then, ladies and gentlemen.

The answer is predictably quite chilling, with the implications further unsettling. The consumer is the final and absolute judge of this award's relevance. If the award answers consumers' need for product information and assessment, then fine. Why does it seem therefore, that those who buy cars aren't taking the results seriously?

All one needs to do is read the public forums on the Web or talk to listen to consumers with something to say about the topic. The answers are all there, the most damning and painful accusation is that all motoring hacks are in the manufacturers' pockets anyway.

## Another winner

The survival of Coty lies in the future. If in the past, the results have been written off as bought and paid for or as concessions to all the manufacturers, it is easy to say that the award and therefore the organization has been ineffective as a consumer protection endeavor.

It will be up to the next group of brave souls who will be willing to give not only their precious time but also their efforts for the good of this organization. My plea to you is plain. Keep it simple, make it transparent and keep it real. After the lights go out on the 2008 awards night next year, it is my hope that another winner is added to the list of awardees—the motoring consumer.

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# *Hyundai Philippines tagged as DEP capital of the world*

In the recent dealer conference held last February 8, 2007 at Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), the exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the Philippines, was officially hailed by Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) as the DEP capital of the world when 12 of its dealers were the first to qualify in the Hyundai Elite certification among over 5,000 Hyundai distributors and dealers across the globe.

The Hyundai Elite certification is a title awarded by HMC to dealers worldwide who have passed the stringent standards set in the Dealer Enhancement Program or DEP. Launched by HMC in 2004, the DEP is an encompassing program that stringently evaluates and monitors the dealers' compliance with the high standards of the Hyundai brand, starting off with their facilities and infrastructures to the processes of their sales and after-sales. The DEP Evaluation Team has set out from one region to the next to visit and assess every Hyundai dealer. A total score of at least 85% must be obtained by a dealer in order to merit the prestigious Hyundai Elite title. HARI dealerships outdid the passing mark with a 92% success rate.

In 2006, 10 HARI dealers were awarded with the Hyundai Elite certification: Hyundai E.Rodriguez, Hyundai Manila Bay, Hyundai La Union, Hyundai Cebu, Hyundai Pampanga, Hyundai Balintawak, Hyundai Otis, Hyundai Naga, Hyundai Pasig, and Hyundai Southern Mindanao (Davao). February of this year, another 2 dealers HMC declared Hyundai Elites: Hyundai Alabang and Hyundai Laguna (Binan).

HARI targets all of its 32 dealers nationwide to be certified by the end of this year.

ADVT.

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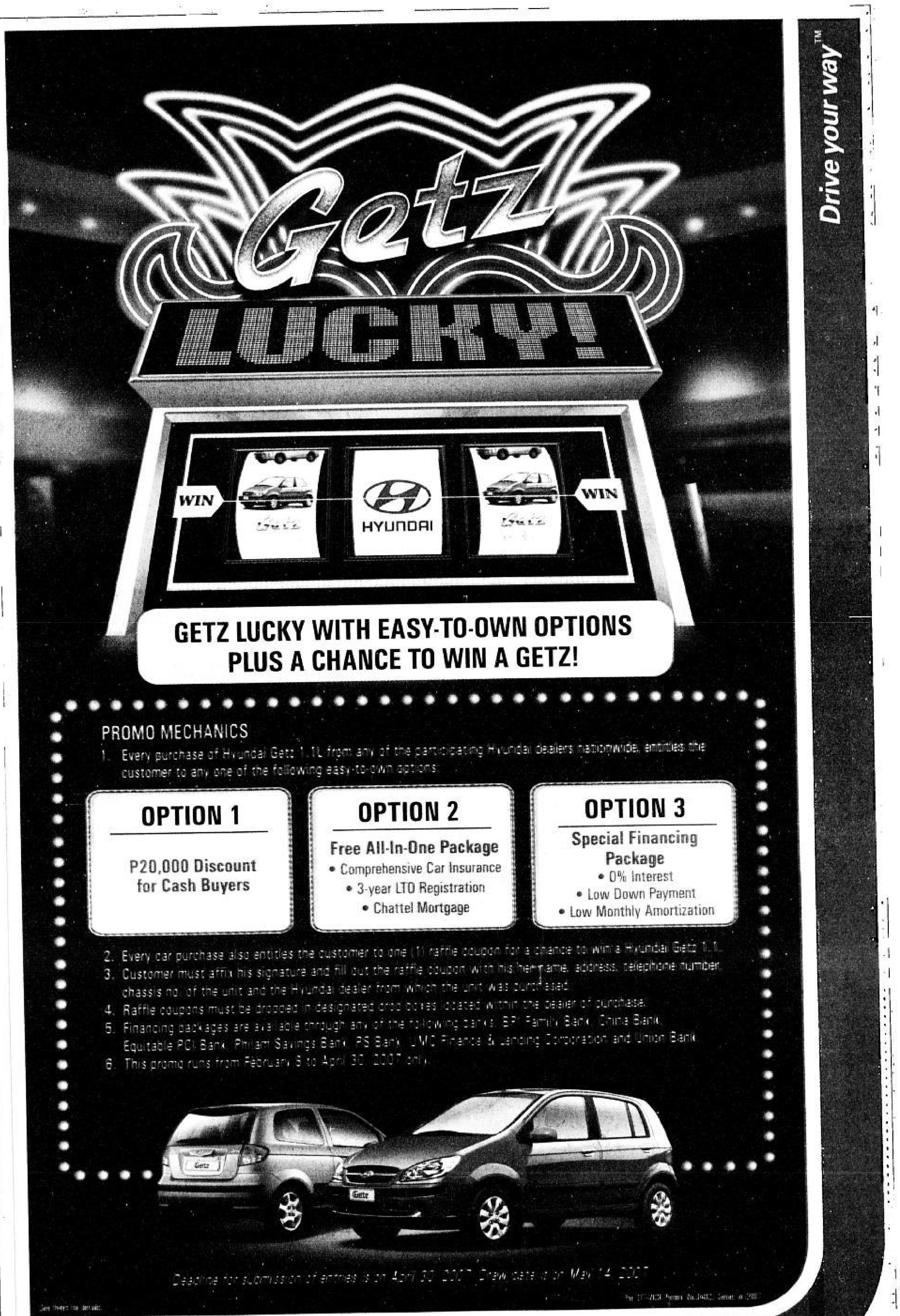

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2. Every car purchase also entitles the customer to one (1) raffle coupon for a chance to win a Hyundai Getz 1.1L.
3. Customer must affix his signature and fill out the raffle coupon with his/her name, address, telephone number, chassis no. of the unit and the Hyundai dealer from which the unit was purchased.
4. Raffle coupons must be dropped in designated drop boxes located within the dealer of purchase.
5. Financing packages are available through any of the following banks: BPI Family Bank, China Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, Philam Savings Bank, PS Bank, UMC Finance & Lending Corporation and Union Bank.
6. This promo runs from February 8 to April 30, 2007 only.

Deadline for submission of entries is on April 30, 2007. Draw date is on May 14, 2007.

See dealers for details.

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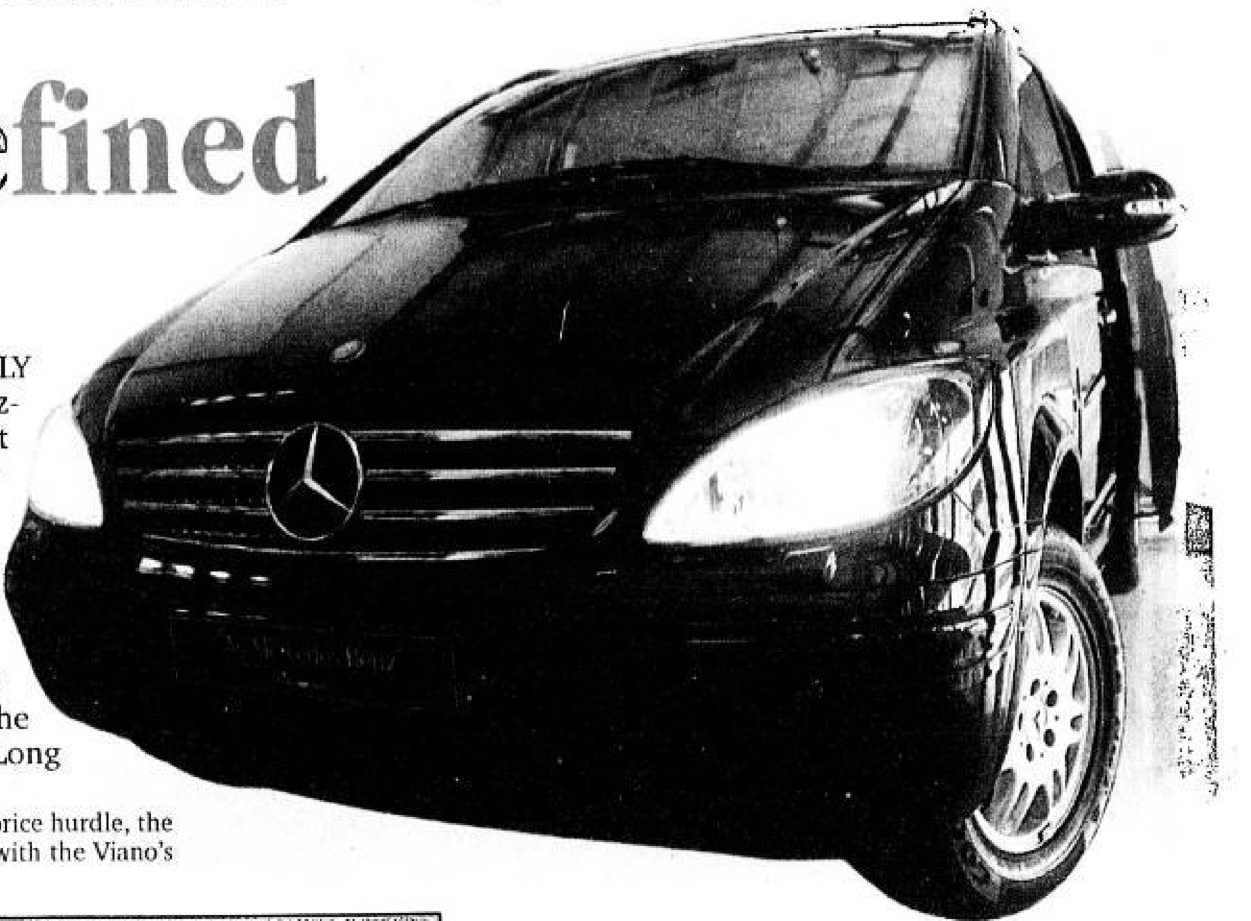
# Luxury MPV redefined

WITH FINE appointments inside, the Viano is among the most luxurious MPVs in the market today.

Text and photos
by Charles E. Buban

NO DOUBT, ONLY those with a sizable budget can afford this new multi-purpose van from Mercedes-Benz, which carries a price tag of P3.7 million (for the 2.2-liter CDI Ambiente Long model) and P4.3 million (for the 3.2 V6 Ambiente Long model).

But once overcoming the price hurdle, the car buyer will be rewarded with the Viano's unparalleled versatility, luxurious appointments and safety features.


WITH A STEEPLY sloping nose, the Viano possesses aerodynamic qualities very few MPVs could match.

From the outside, the Viano looks like most vans except for its unmistakable Mercedes-Benz grille, striking headlamps and steeply sloping nose.

But what separates the Viano from the rest is its well thought-out interior.

## Particular attention

"Particular attention is given to the Viano's ergonomics, comfort and capacity. The Viano can accommodate up to seven passengers as well as cargo of all shapes and sizes. It features a rail system that allows the seats to be removed or repositioned without much effort," said Felix Ang, president of CATS Motors Inc., the official distributor of the Mercedes-Benz brand in the Philippines.

Ang further explained that the Viano's seat rail system allows one to move a single seat or the whole row forward or backward at any position along the rails' length.

Furthermore, the second row could be repositioned to face the rear. On this configuration, the fold-away table located in the middle of the second row seats could be moved so it could be used as a center table.

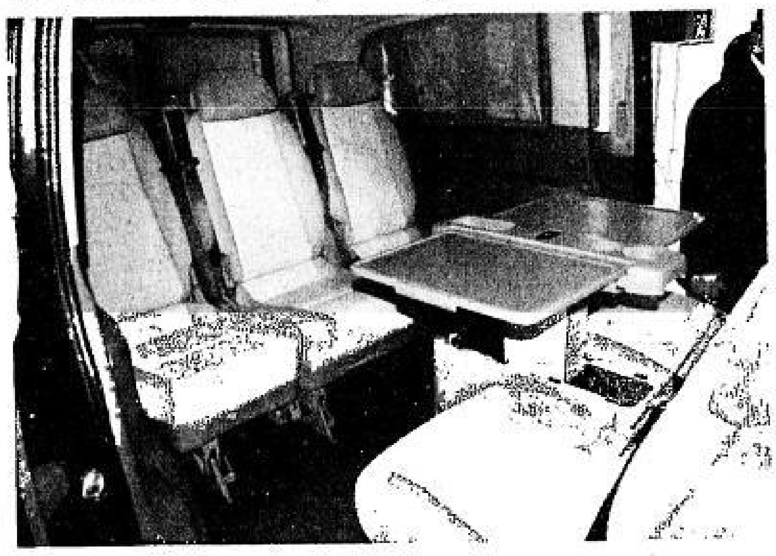
To accommodate larger cargo, the second and third rows seats can be removed by hand and without tools through the rear hatch.

## 2 variants

CATS Motors informed that the 190 horsepower 3.2-liter V6 gasoline model is already available while the 150-hp 2.2-liter diesel model will be arriving soon. Both models will be available in 5-speed automatic gearbox.

Since both models carry the Ambiente Long trims, they will feature rear air suspension system with self-leveling functions, alloy wheels, leather upholstery as well as a longer load compartment (by 24.5 cm.)

"Combine this with Viano's dynamic handling control systems, sophisticated chassis, and you have a perfect MPV that provides not only high levels of ride comfort and excellent handling qualities but road-holding ability that is almost sedan-like," Ang said.


THE FOLD-AWAY table will prove very handy especially when seats are configured to face each other.

---

# *No tricks, just treats at L.A. Cars*

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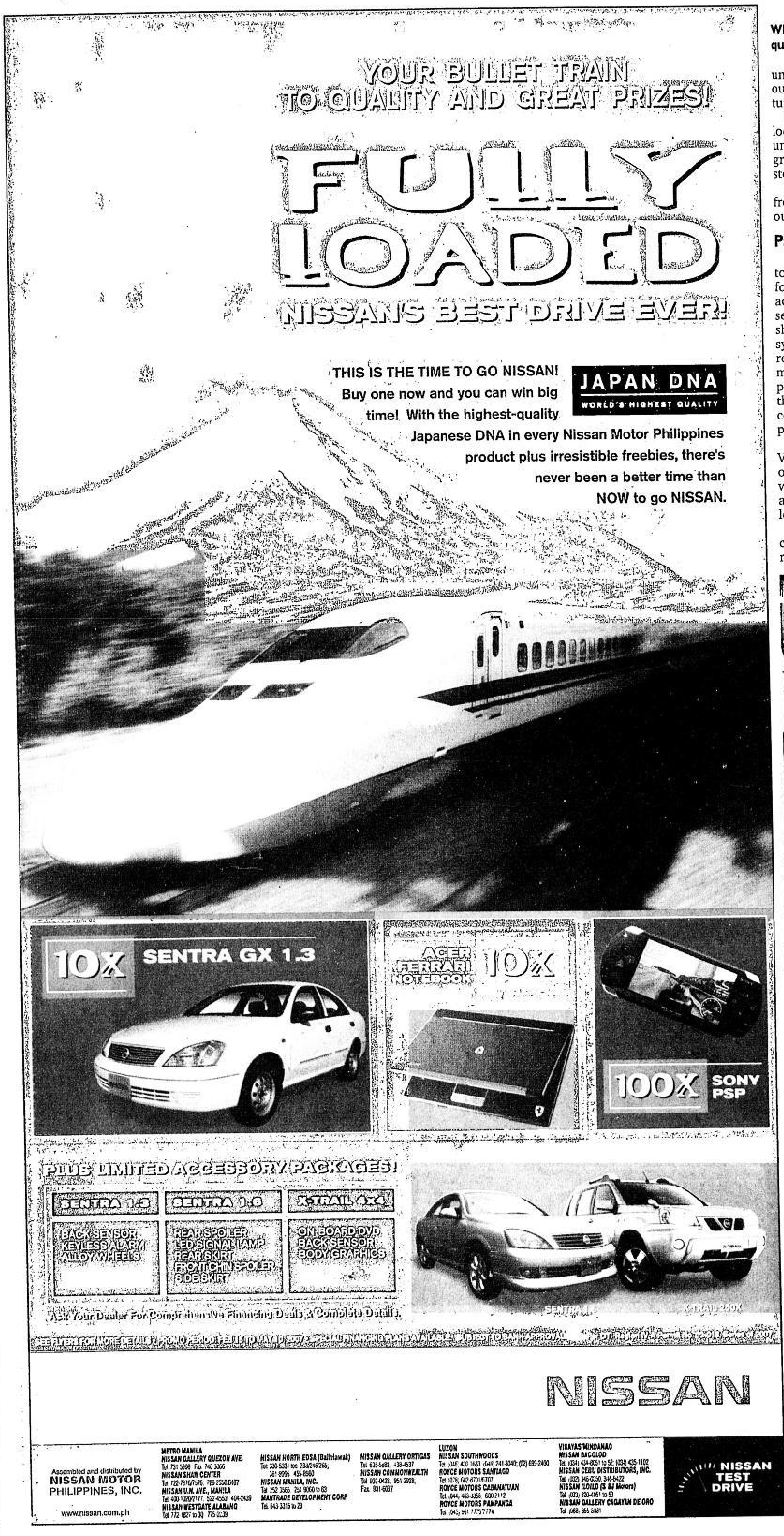
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# New kids on the resto block

These food havens don't really have a lot in common, except for their location and the desire to please your taste buds

FOOD TRIP. Promenade's restaurants rocked our taste buds.

**By Pam Pastor**
**Photos by August dela Cruz**

EVERYONE GOES THROUGH restaurant burnout, when you have the toughest time choosing where to eat because every other place seems old, boring and unexciting. Sometimes, a change in location is the answer.

Last week, we visited Greenhills Promenade @ Theater Mall, and went on a food trip. Juan Paolo Mendoza, general manager of the Music Museum Group, shared with us his favorite yummy treats at Promenade: "The Fried Shrimp Puff at Wanton, Greek Salad at Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, burger at Tender Bobs, Aglio Rosamarino at Cibo and Wild Mushroom Pizza at CPK."

But we had our own picks as well—here are three of our new favorites.

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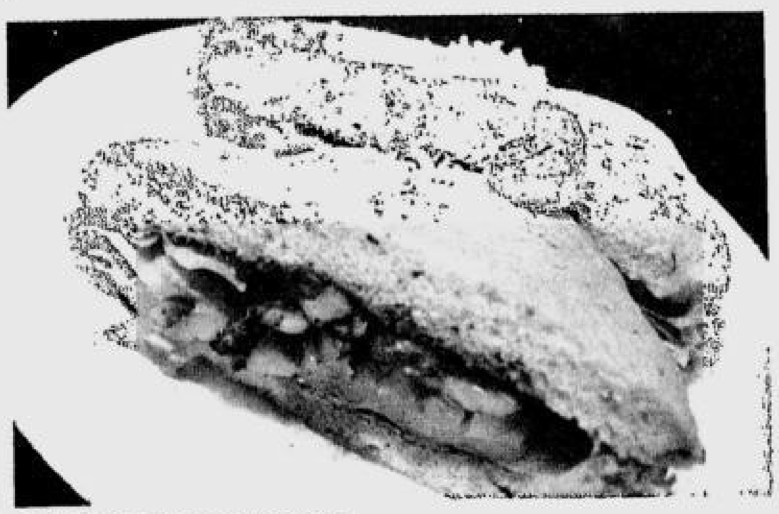
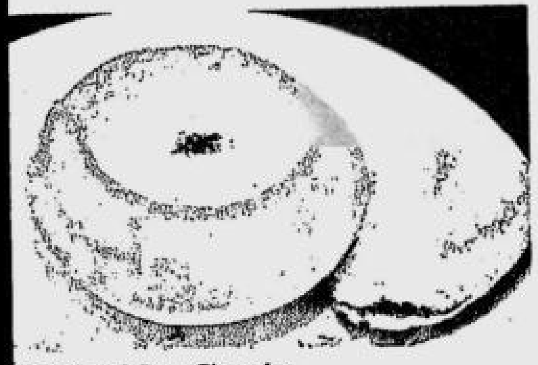
**CHOCOLATE** Mint Cheesecake



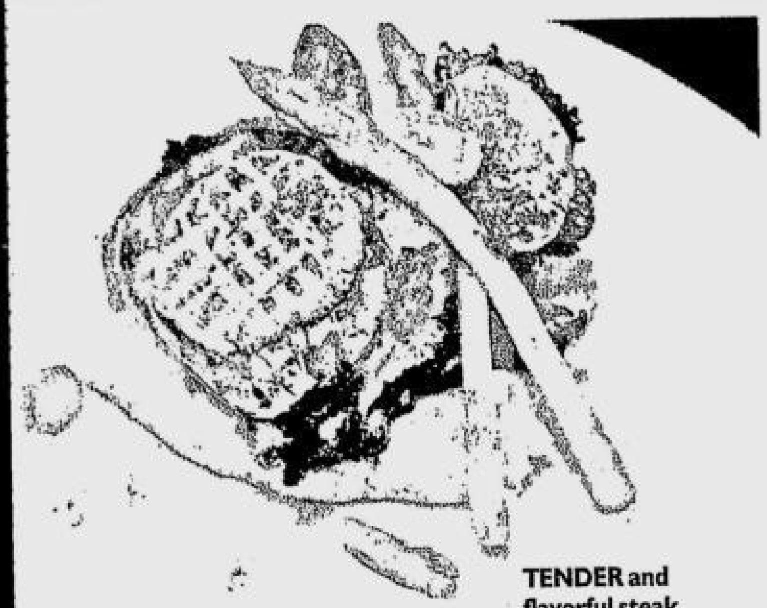
**ORIENTAL** Chicken Sandwich

**BLUE** Cheese Chicken Fettucini

# New kids on the resto block



**CLAM** and Corn Chowder



**TENDER** and flavorful steak

**SIBLINGS** Timmie and Tanibel run Annabel Lee, a resto café named after their mother.

**DOUBLE** Dutch Chocolate Pecan Cheesecake

From page C1

## Annabel Lee

**The story:** This family-run resto café started as a cheesecake and coffee place in Timog Avenue, Quezon City.

After much prodding from customers who didn't want to go to a different place for their meal before having dessert in Annabel Lee, the family decided to include savory items in the menu.

A real family affair (one named after their mother), the resto is managed by 29-year-old Tanibel Daphne Lee, who graduated from DLSU with a degree in Marketing Management, while her brother, 27-year-old Timothy Dennis Lee, who took up HRIM in DLSU-CSB, is the restaurant's executive chef.

Their parents make the unbelievably yummy cheesecakes that they serve.

"Our mom's cake business started in 1983," says Tanibel.

Annabel Lee's Promenade branch opened with the mall in 2005.

**Why it's good:** "Everything is gourmet, which means we make everything out of scratch, out of natural ingredients. No powder, no MSG. We make our own bread, our own corned beef, our clam chowder is made with real clams, some of our sauces take 12 hours to make," says Tanibel.

**Bestsellers:** The sandwiches ("People bring them to the cinemas"), the pasta and the frappes

**What they recommend:** Blue Cheese Chicken Fettucini (P225), the tenderloin, the Santa Fe Chicken Sandwich ("It's very different," says Timmie) and the Baked Almond White Chocolate Cheesecake

**2bU! favorites:** Oriental Chicken Sandwich (chicken loins marinated with Chinese herbs and spices between foccacia slices, P155), Clam and Corn Chowder (New England-style chowder served in freshly baked bread bowls, P145) and Double Dutch Chocolate Pecan Cheesecake

**Operating hours:** Greenhills branch—10 a.m.-10 p.m., Sundays-Thursdays, and 10 a.m.-11 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays; Timog Branch—11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sundays-Thursdays, and 11 a.m.-1 a.m., Fridays and Saturdays

## Arya

**The story:** Shin Karami's wife Semira is an excellent cook. And because she wanted to cook for more people, Shin started holding business meetings at home where his guests always devoured the food.

Friends started telling the couple that they should put up a restaurant. Because they own a garments business in Greenhills, the Karamis figured it was the perfect place for their food venture, too.

"It was a wild wish," Shin says. They were given a great spot in Promenade, but with one condition—that they would open before Christmas, which was only a little over two months away.

"We made it and everyone was amazed," Shin says.

Arya is Shin's way of sharing Persian food with Filipinos. Shin, who grew up here, says, "*Pinoy ako sa puso.*"

**Why it's good:** Shin is very particular about food and restaurant service. "I've always loved food but I would always find something wrong with the service of other restaurants. The service, the dirty kitchen, the freshness of the food. I said to myself, if I put up my own resto, I will make sure that those problems wouldn't be there," he says.

**Bestsellers:** Kabab Koobideh (a Persian-style hamburger), Falafel (chick peas and herbs patties served with spicy mango sauce, P115)

**What they recommend:** Zeresh Polo (stewed tender chicken thigh served with fluffy *basmati* rice topped with raspberries, pistachio and almond halves), Sambuseh (crispy triangle pockets filled with mashed potato, *wansoy* and cheese, P115)

**2bU! Favorites:** Mahiche Polo (deli-

**SHIN** Karami runs Arya with his wife Semira.

FA

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| April 7 (special non-working day) | Black Saturday* | 10:00 am - 10:00 pm |
| April 9 (Araw ng Kagitingan) | Monday* (Holiday Rate) | 2:00 pm – 10:00 pm |
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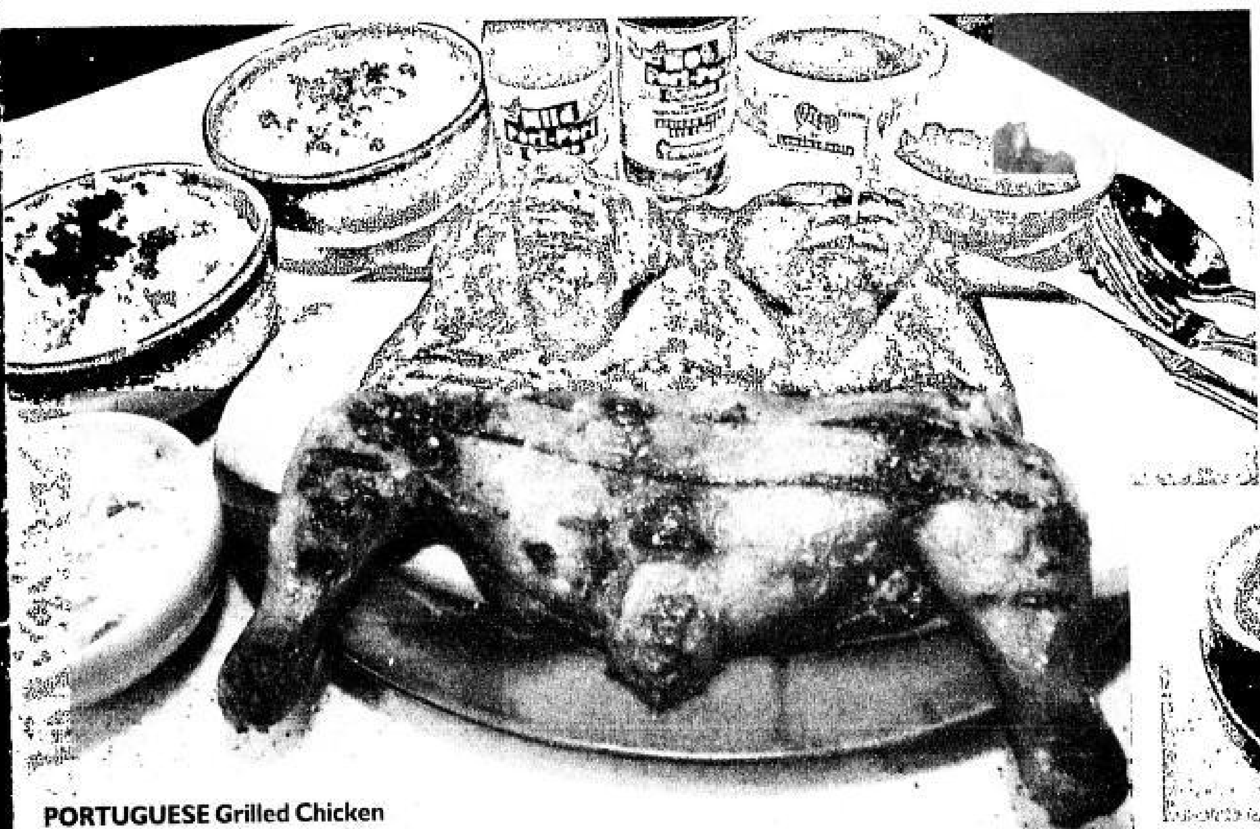
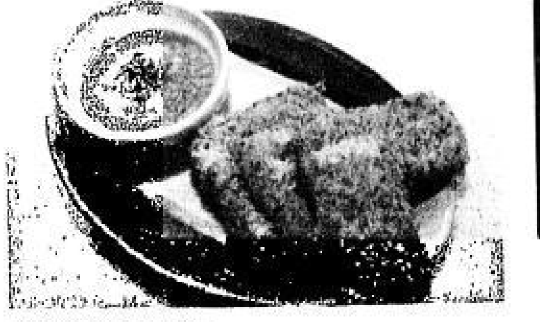
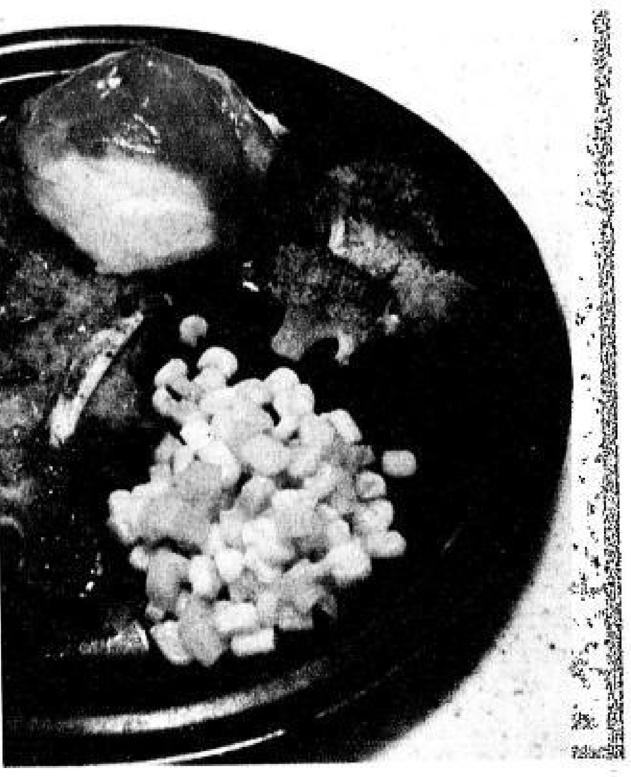


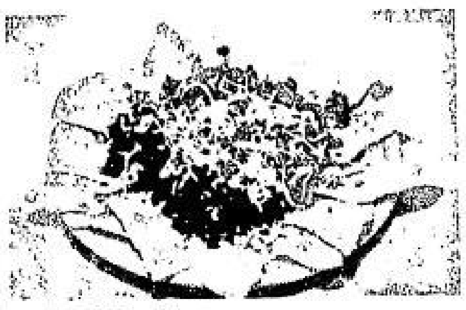
**PORTUGUESE** Grilled Chicken



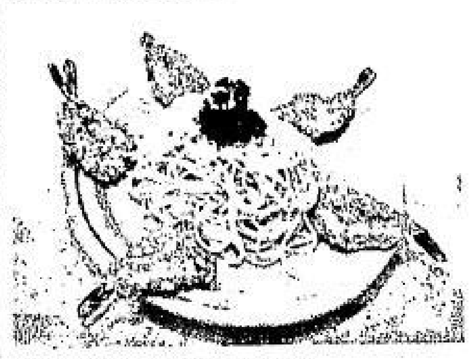
**FRIED** Mozzarella



**GRILLED** Pork Chop



**CRISPY** Taco Platter



**PARMESAN** Shrimp Pasta

cious lamb shank stewed Persian-style, served with flavored dilled *basmati* rice, P455)

**Operating hours:** 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sundays-Thursdays, and 11 a.m.-12 midnight, Fridays and Saturdays

## Peri-Peri Chicken

**The story:** Peri-Peri Chicken was born out of a desire to serve a different kind of chicken menu. Opened in May last year, the place has been serving Portuguese grilled chicken marinated without MSG. Ferdie Paz, Peri-Peri Chicken's operations manager, says the sauces also set their chicken apart from those available in other restaurants.

"We give you a choice between mild and hot," he says.

But Peri-Peri Chicken doesn't just serve chicken. The recently expanded menu now includes pastas, steaks, calamares, grilled items and more.

**Why it's good:** Because the resto brings together good comfort food under one roof—and at affordable prices

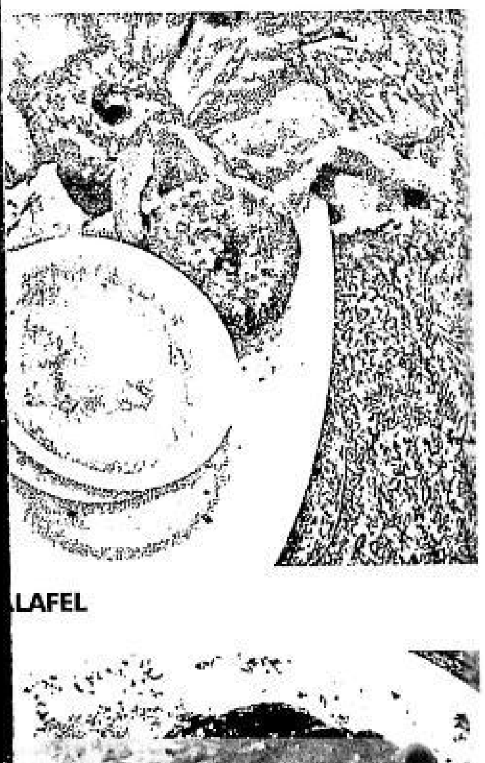
**Bestsellers:** Portuguese Grilled Chicken (P355)

**What they recommend:** Parmesan Shrimp Pasta (P228); Grilled Pork Chop (P145); and the fruit shakes

**2bU! Favorites:** Crispy Taco Platter (P95); Fried Mozzarella (P175)

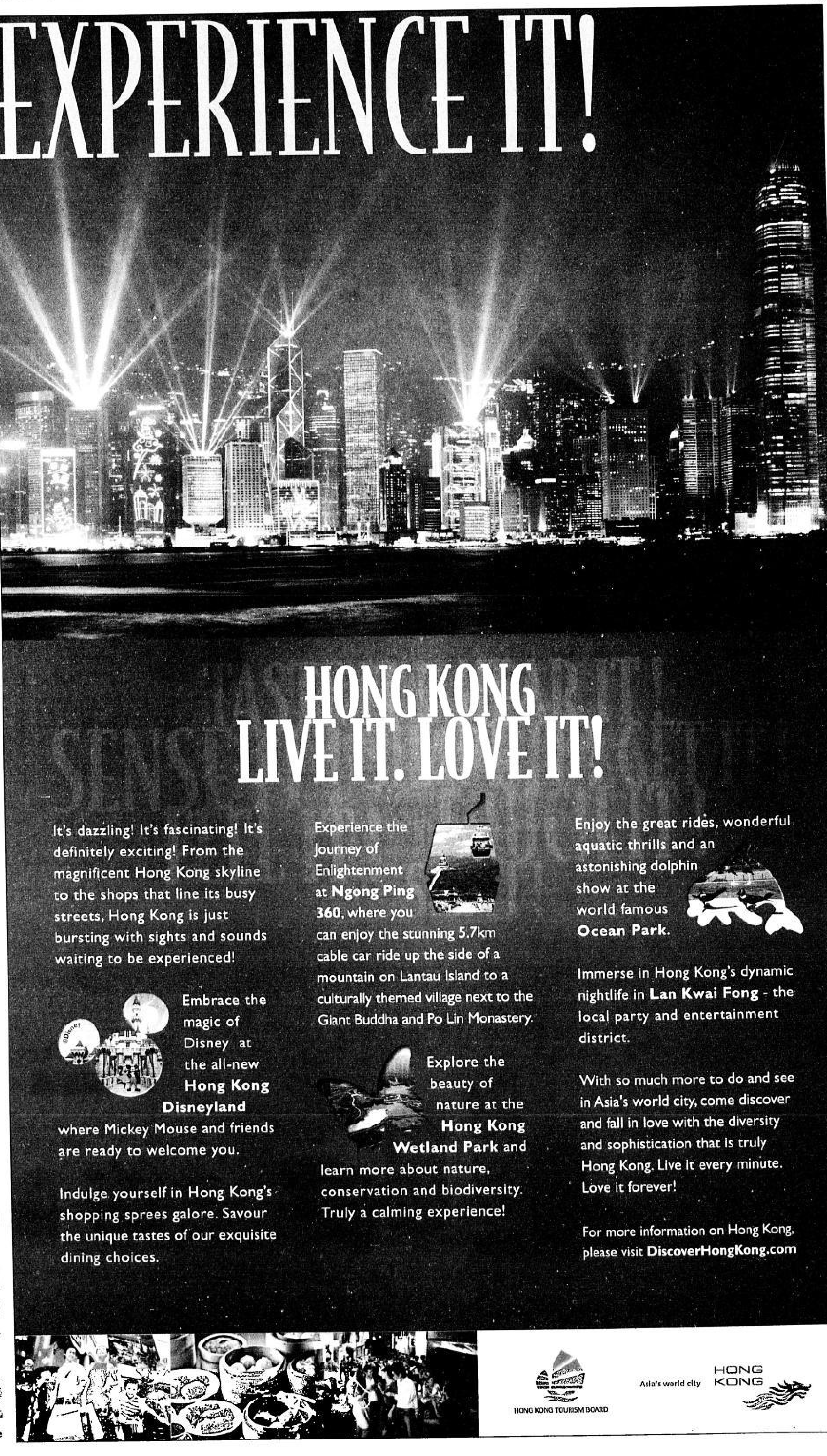
**Operating hours:** 11 a.m.-12 midnight every day. Call 7253355 for reservations.

*E-mail the author at ppastor @inquirer.com.ph*



**LAFEL**

**LICIOUS** lamb shank stewed Persian-style



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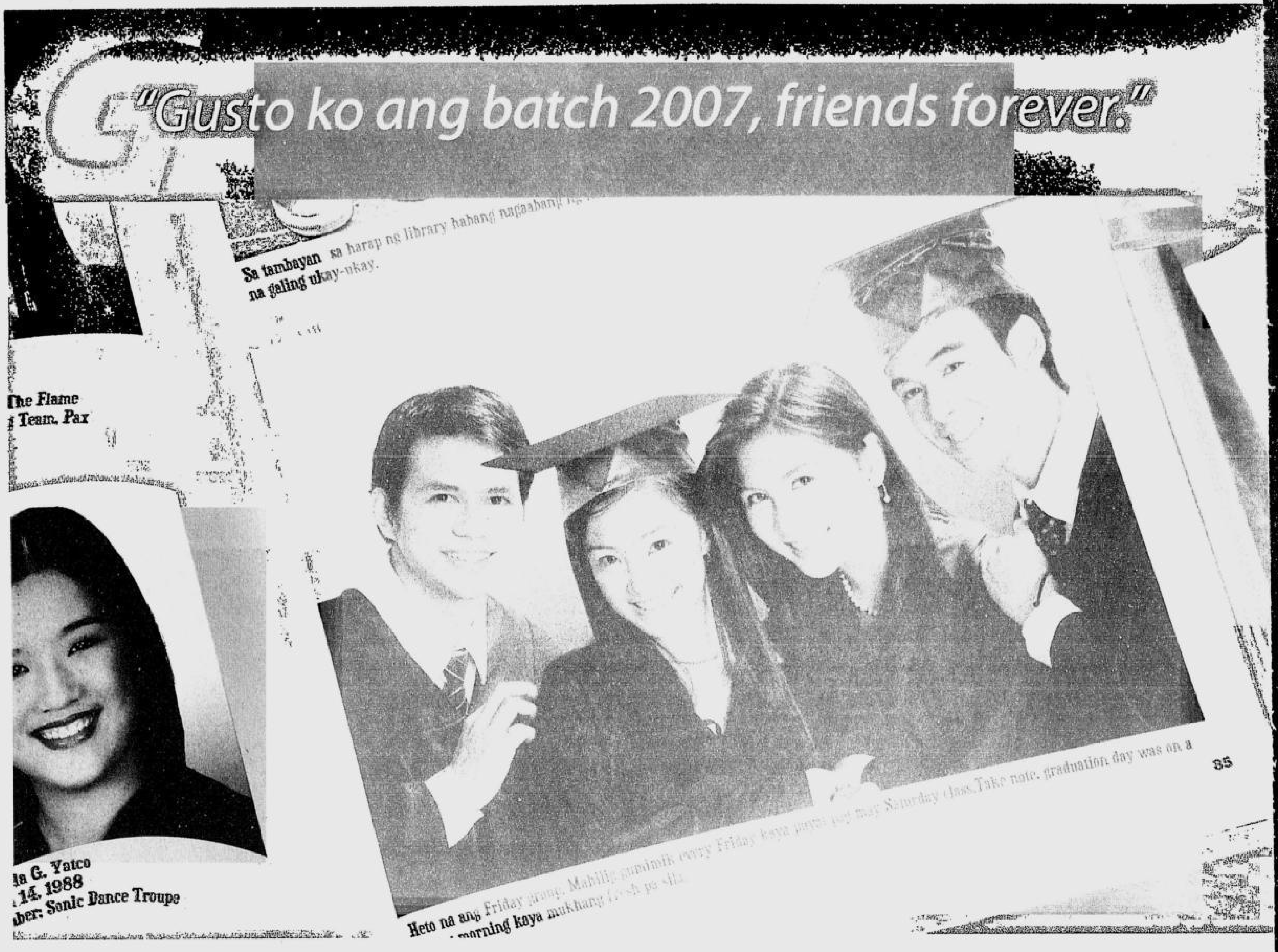
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85

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0892 Series of 2007. See posters for details.

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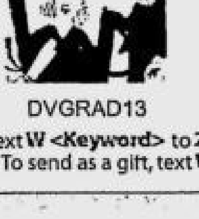
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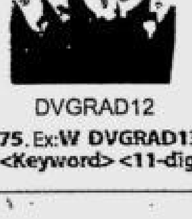
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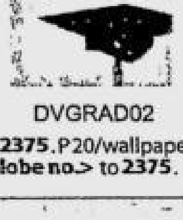

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**Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1131 Series of 2007. See posters for details. Promo period is from March 14-31, 2007.

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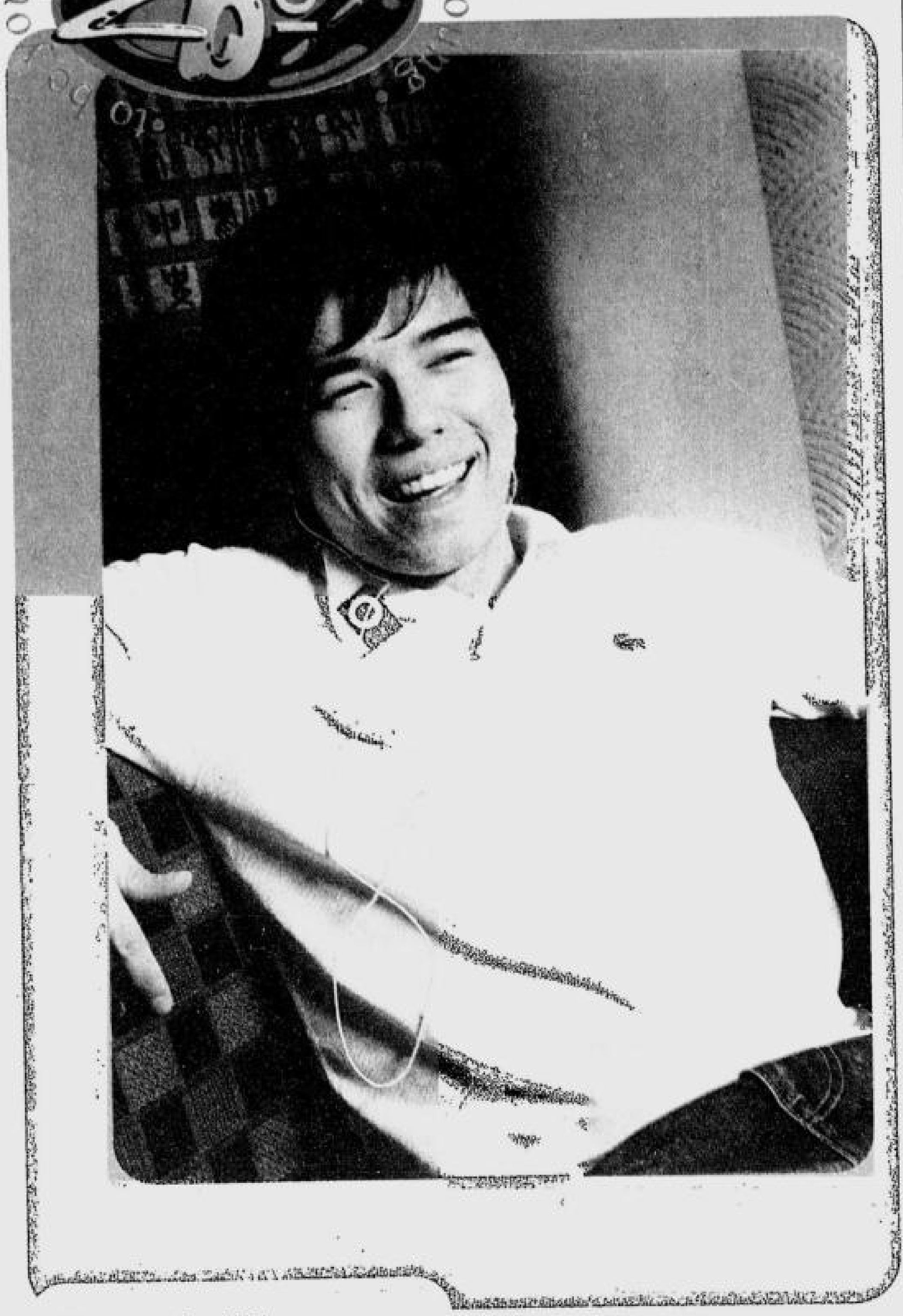

Champ Lui-Pio

**Caught him at:** Jack's Loft in Eastwood, where he was meeting the other members of his band Hale so they could drive to Rizal to shoot the video for their new single, "Shooting Star"

**Currently busy with:** Preparing for a special show at the Music Museum in May, their Guam and United States tours in May and June, and a campus tour this year

**Will wear the green iPod Shuffle:** On his collar

**One song he cannot stop listening to now:** "One More Night" by Stars

**Five songs he thinks you must put in your iPod:** "Bloc Party" by Krenzberg; "One More Night" by Stars; "Gravity" and "Slow Dancing Inside A Burning Room" by John Mayer; "Inside Your Head" by Eberg

Your favorite OPM artists and the iPod Shuffle have one big thing in common—their place in the pop-culture arena which they have secured with an awesome mix of music, technology and style

# Mad about music

**Text by Pam Pastor**
**Photos by Christian Panganiban**

TO SELL THE NEW IPOD Shuffle as a fashion accessory would be a piece of cake. With its cute size and yummy new colors, it doesn't take a genius to know that not only can it store your music (one gigabyte of it), it can spruce up your outfit, too. Apple god Steve Jobs doesn't call it "the most wearable music player" for nothing. Even the ads show you that, as they flash images of one cool teenager after another and how they wear their iPod Shuffle.

So when the Fashion Freaks were given the chance to play with all the colors of the iPod Shuffle, we decided against doing a typical fashion shoot.

Instead, we decided to do something fun—stalk some of the country's best musicians, ask them how they would wear the Shuffle and to recommend iPod-worthy songs.

Yeah, yeah, we like a challenge.

Stalking these music personalities wasn't as simple as we thought it would be. It involved finding a great photographer who made himself available for us even at random hours of the week, who made the subjects feel at ease at the snap of a finger and who could get good photos in under five minutes. It also involved the cooperation of record labels and road managers, dodging insanely strict guards, getting up really early on a weekend and countless schedule changes.

We found Sitti in ABS-CBN and although she was rushing to get to her "Pinoy Big Brother" taping, she was a joy to work with, even singing under her breath during the shoot.

We spoke to Pupil's Ely Buendia exactly two months after his heart attack and we were glad to see that he was back on his feet, still totally in love with music, and he seemed stronger than ever.

6CycleMind's Ney Dimaculangan was sunny and funny even on a Saturday morning, which shows us that the Pinoy rock star is cut from a different (nicer) mold than their hotel-trashing counterparts.

Jugs Jugueta of the Itchyworms was fun, and he didn't complain even when we made him pose on top of a toilet bowl. (Maybe because he's got serious iPod love—he says he has 15,000 songs in his own unit.)

Champ Lui-Pio had a long day ahead of him but he was game and shared with us exciting things that were coming up for Hale.

Bringing together the Shuffle and some of our favorite OPM artists wasn't such a far-fetched idea. After all, they have a lot of things in common—like their existence in the pop-culture arena which they have cemented with an awesome mix of music, technology and style.

Rock on.

*Do you want the 2bU! Fashion Freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail 2bu-fashionfreaks@yahoo.com*

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# Mad about music

## Jugs Jugueta

**Caught him at:** ABS-CBN's Studio 5, with his band Itchyworms, at a taping for "Sharon'"s "Unplugged" episode

**Currently busy with:** Gigs, gigs and more gigs, and writing songs for their next album

**Will wear the blue iPod Shuffle:** On his guitar

**One song he cannot stop listening to now:** "Turning My Safety Off" by Sino Sikat?

**Five songs he thinks you must put in your iPod:** "Dear Kuya" by Sugar Free; "Ikaw Lamang" by Silent Sanctuary; "Cool Nerds" by Ciudad; "Noon Time Show" by Itchyworms (Shameless plugging!); "Ikaw" by Chillitees

## Sitti

**Caught her at:** ABS-CBN, at a taping for "Pinoy Big Brother"

**Currently busy with:** Preparing for her March 23 show at the Music Museum (for tickets, call 7216727 or Ticketworld at 8919999) and promoting her "Limited Edition Café Bossa" repackaged album which comes with a VCD of music videos and live performances

**Will wear the pink iPod Shuffle:** On her top

**One song she cannot stop listening to now:** "By Your Side" by Sade

**Five songs she thinks you must put in your iPod:** "Brazil" by Antonio Carlos Jobim (It's the ultimate bossa nova song, makes me feel the sea breeze.); any song from Yo-Yo Ma; "Angel" by Sarah Mclachlan (stress buster); "Para Sa Akin" by Sitti (To remind you guys that I exist, haha!); "Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now" by Starship (To remind you guys of the growing-up years, hahaha!)

## Ely Buendia

**Caught him at:** A recording studio in Makati

**Currently busy with:** Recording "Set Me Apart," the new theme song of Animax, with his band Pupil, and working on their second album

**Will wear the silver iPod Shuffle:** On his cap

**One song he cannot stop listening to now:** "Set Me Apart" by Pupil (I've been listening to it and I will still listen to it many times because we're still improving it.)

**Five songs he thinks you must put in your iPod:** "Bicycle Bicycle You Are My Bicycle" by Be Your Own Pet (Be Your Own Pet is a band from Nashville. They were discovered by Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore.); "You Should Be Dancing" by Bee Gees (Retro trip *ako ngayon.*); "…And You Will Know Us" by Trail of Dead; "Cello Suites" by Bach; "Controversy" by Prince

## Ney Dimaculangan

**Caught him at:** NU 107, fresh from 6CycleMind's "The First Set" session with DJ Trish

**Currently busy with:** Promoting their third album "Home" and their single "Prinsesa." They will start recording their fourth album this month. They're also preparing for a gig in Dubai in May. The band is also on their nationwide tour which will hit 54 cities this year.

**Will wear the orange iPod Shuffle:** As a pendant or on his sleeve

**One song he cannot stop listening to now:** "Brighter" by Paramore

**Five songs he thinks you must put in your iPod:** "Prinsesa" by 6CycleMind; "Like A Stone" by Audioslave; "If You're Gone" by Matchbox 20; "Undone—The Sweater Song" by Weezer; "Every Little Thing" by Dishwalla

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# New summer line for sports fas

**SUMMER** streetwear

FILA, THE ITALIAN SPORTS Fashion house, gives new twists on stylish activewear. Its new pieces for summer are meant to be worn not only when logging in hours at the gym, but also for carousing and socials.

The Fioré collection introduces a stylish floral print meant to update and give a chic island feel to basic pieces such as baby tees, drawstring skirts, empire-cut tank tops, crewneck shirts and even boardshorts.

Huge floral prints stand out against the delicious shades of lime, lemon, orange and lilac for women; and classic shades of navy blue, red and orange for men.

Made of lightweight 100-percent cotton, the pieces will surely do well on a beach or in the mall.

The splashes of bright summery shades continue with Fila's Performance line. The Benessere (Italian for well-being) collection, geared for yoga and pilates afficionados, offers belted cowlneck tank tops and wide-leg pants with fold-down waist details in refreshing lime and citrus shades.

Other interesting pieces include cropped pants, fitted tanks, and hoodies, all made of a cotton-Lycra blend.

Males can go for cotton piqué tennis jackets with matching trackpants; striped jersey ribbed cotton shirts; varsity jackets with subtle details such as eyelets or mesh appliqués; or striped retro-style swim shorts reminiscent of the '50s beach scene.

For those whose tastes lean toward the conservative, Fila offers a chic black-and-white collection which effectively combines current styles with activewear technology.

Sleek and sheer nylon jersey tees come with a built-in bra, while daring racerback tanks and bra tops feature a built-in mesh feature that doesn't only filter in an interesting style detail but also allows the skin to breathe easier.

Fitted black ribbed jersey tees look are so sleek that you can even pair them with your favorite black cocktail skirt and accessories for a new twist on an evening ensemble.

Tailored cotton-nylon jackets for men give off an Ethan Hunt feel, while black-and-white trackpants make for a more comfortable alternative to denims.

Fila will launch its Fiore Collection on April 1 at SM Mall of Asia with a full day of activities such as wall climbing, freestyle dance exhibition, graffiti art performance and live band performances. The highlight is a fashion show at 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

**MAKE** summer hotter with fun pieces from Fila.

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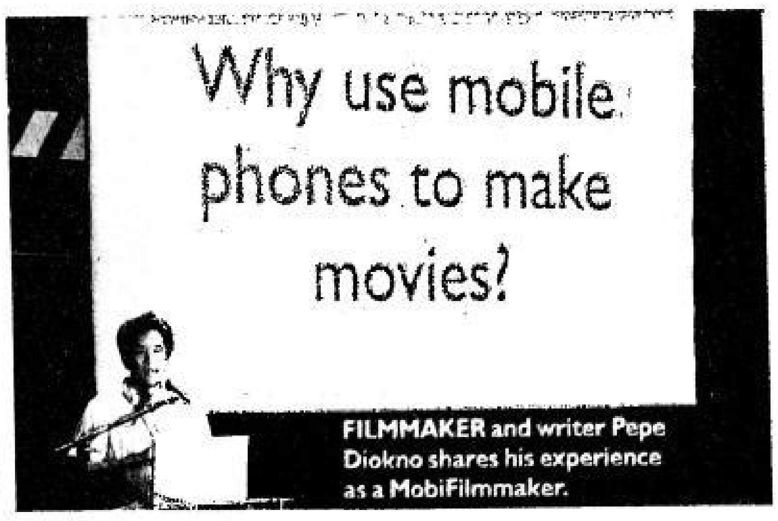
MOBIFILMS 2007 workshop finalists and participants


Why use mobile phones to make movies?

**FILMMAKER** and writer Pepe Diokno shares his experience as a MobiFilmmaker.

With MobiFilms, Nokia and Discovery Channel are creating a new generation of filmmakers armed only with their talent and N93i phones

# Mobile movies

**By Tammy David**
*2bU! Correspondent*
**Photos by Tammy David**

NOKIA, A LEADER in mobile communications, is contributing to the democratization of filmmaking with its line of video-enabled mobile phones.

Dubbed as multimedia computers, Nokia handsets, particularly the N90 and N93, give owners a whole new experience in filmmaking with the phone's first-rate optics from Carl Zeiss.

The company, together with Discovery Networks Asia, launched the Mobile Filmmakers Awards in 2005. Dubbed "MobiFilms," the awards aim to empower camera phone users to showcase their talent using their mobile phones.

Thousands of entries across the region have tried their luck with MobiFilms. One of the first Mobile FilmMakers Awardees is Filipino Janice Yu. Her creativity, originality, visualization and technical excellence won the judges over in Singapore, where the finals were held.

Nokia and Discovery Channel recently held the 2nd Mobile Filmmakers Workshop in Teatrino Greenhills for some 25 finalists who qualified out of 100 entries this year.

To qualify, the finalists registered in youmakeitreel.com and submitted a storyboard for indie punk band Greyskull's music video.

During the workshop facilitated by BBC's Ian Oliver, finalists listened to young filmmaker and INQUIRER Super! writer Pepe Diokno and Yu on the exciting possibilities offered by mobile filmmaking.

BBC's Ian Oliver conducts the MobiFilms workshop.

## Fine points

After the lectures, the participants were given the chance to create their own mobile films. With the help of Nokia academy demonstrators, they learned the fine points of shooting a Mobifilm such as how to use natural and artificial lighting; incorporating music; editing clips; and utilizing the functions and settings available in their camera phones. Yes, editing the video can be done on your phone!

The finalists were asked to create a 60-second music video on the N93i, with tracks of rock bands Blink 182, Third Eye Blind and Green Day as accompanying music and the surrounding environment of Teatrino and The Promenade, Greenhills, as backdrop.

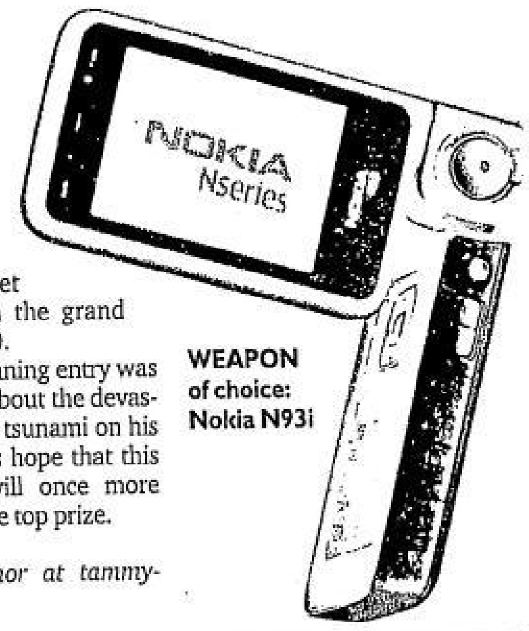
After almost four hours, all 25 finalists produced entries that gave judges Oliver, Nokia's Sandeep Khanna and Grace del Callar a hard time to pick just one winner. Eventually, they named the Top 5 entries, which came from Randy Tiempo, David Guerrero, Robert Quebral, JP Palileo and Avery Alina.

Tiempo emerged as the winner of the workshop, and took home fabulous Bose speakers.

The 25 finalists are now executing their own storyboards for the final video contest to be judged on March 24. The two lucky winners will win P100,000, a brand new Nokia N93i, and a once-in-a-lifetime chance to sing along with Greyskull at the Indie Music Festival in Singapore. If they make it to the regional round, they also get the chance to win the grand prize of US$10,000.

Last year, the winning entry was by an Indonesian, about the devastating effects of the tsunami on his home country. Let's hope that this year, a Filipino will once more come home with the top prize.

*E-mail the author at tammydavid@gmail.com*



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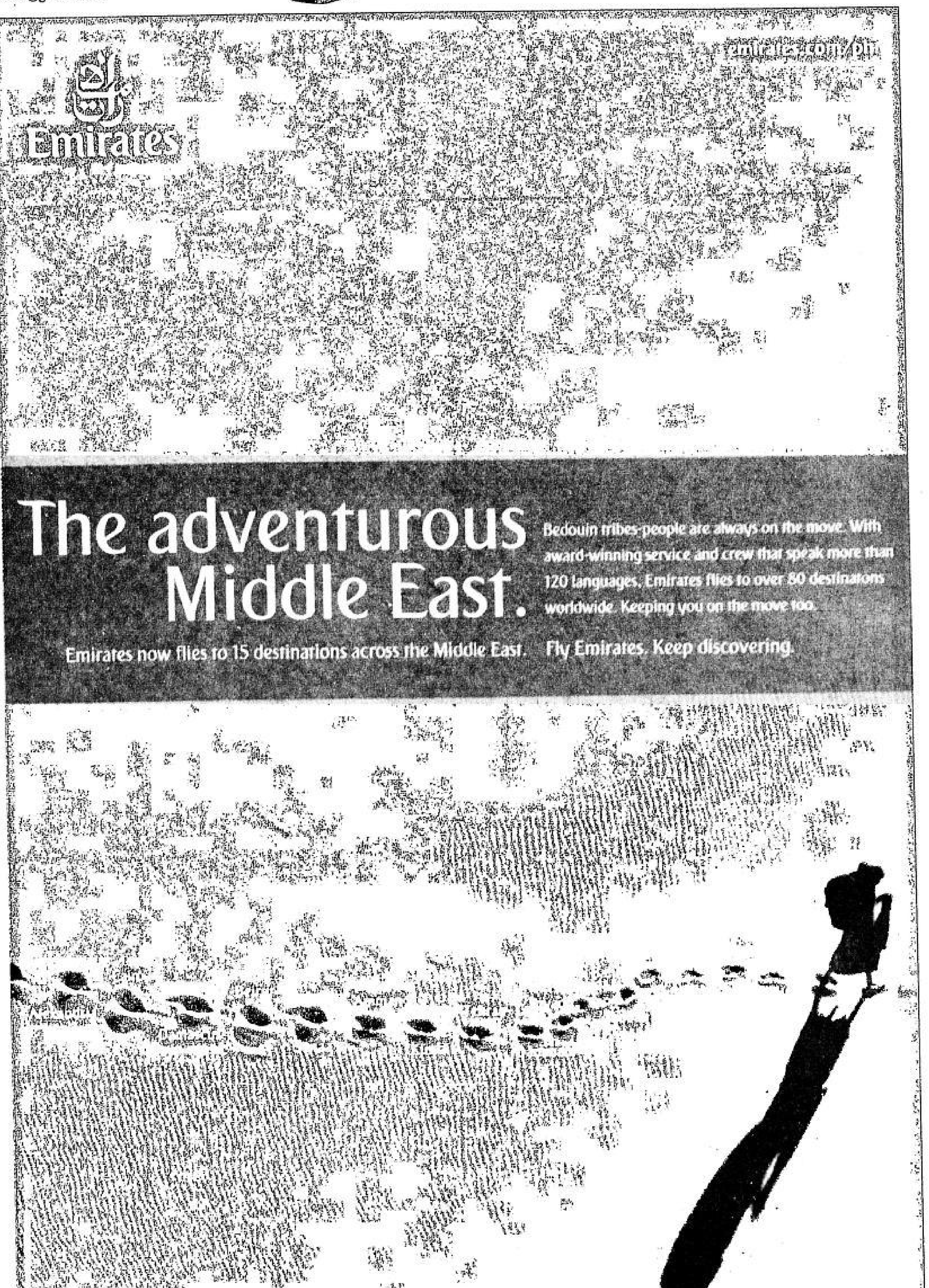

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# nion house

# The challenge of Internet news

## Will Web news replace TV or print? Yahoo! Answers thinks so

**By Lawrence Casiraya**
*Inquirer.net*

WHILE THE WEB WILL NEVER totally replace TV or print, there are a few who believe it's definitely influencing consumer behavior and even affecting how traditional media such as TV and print operate.

And partly to test how well the Internet can accurately get people's opinions, Inquirer.net posted the question, "Will online and wireless media ever replace TV or print?" over at Yahoo! Answers (http://ph.answers.yahoo.com).

In less than 24 hours after the question was posted, seven visitors posted their answers ranging from a short yet direct "Yes" to lengthier explanations.

A certain "Mr. Sparkle," for example, said that it's not any more likely the Web will replace anything as was the case for radio replacing print or TV replacing radio, but "each is a new medium that offers delivery of the same content in a different format" and believes the market becomes more fragmented based on consumer preferences.

"Fara," on the other hand, believes user preference is basically driven by the inherent nature of each medium: "If you have a choice in viewing something you want by clicking on it or waiting for someone else to tell you when to catch the program, which would you choose?"

Another user points to a blurring line between both media, noting that today's PCs can be equipped with TV tuners anyway, thus extending the latter "experience" into another platform.

YAHOO exec Brad Horowitz strikes a pose with Malaysian director Yasmin Ahmad during the recent launch of Yahoo! Answers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

### People + algorithm

Yahoo! Answers was recently introduced in the Philippines and Malaysia as part of localized services the US-based search engine is trying to introduce in the region.

The site carries a simple interface: Users either post a question or answer questions that were posted at the site. Users can rate the answers to a given question while the "asker" gets to select the best answer.

Yahoo informs users via e-mail about answers posted on the site.

Brad Horowitz, vice president of Yahoo's Advanced Development division in Sunnyvale, California, believes this community-driven process elevates Internet search to a higher level.

Search engines like Yahoo and rival Google, for example, use software algorithms that calculate the number of times websites link to each other, thus creating a hierarchy that puts the most linked sites at the top of search results.

Entering in certain keywords, however, may fall short of what the user really wants to know. For example, if a user wishes to find out where to find the best *pansit* (Chinese noodles) in Manila, results may list restaurants that carry *pansit* but does not necessarily describe people's opinion.

By combining "people" with software algorithm, Horowitz said Yahoo is creating a social network-type of service. "We also capture the body of knowledge within a specific community," he said when Inquirer.net talked to him during the recent launch of Yahoo! Answers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Ultimately, benefit for users is they're able to get better (or more exact) answers from Yahoo's own user community. According to Yahoo, the entire Yahoo! Answers database now has some 20 million answers. The service was launched in more than 20 countries and attracts more than 90 million "unique" users every month.

THEY have the answers. Yahoo people pose with members of the media at the launch of Yahoo! Answers in Kuala Lumpur.

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# Give back to the beach

## Beach-bum Pinoys should show in word and deed their love for sand, shore and sea

**By Ria Rivera**
*Contributor*

FOR SOMEONE WHO doesn't know how to swim, I sure am in love with the beach. The beach to me is like an old major crush—someone you don't get to see all that often but one who never fails to give you that inexplicable rush. And unlike those crushes you learn to outgrow over time, my fascination for the open blue and sunny shores never wanes. It just keeps on growing on me with every trip.

From merely wading into waist-deep water, I have now progressed to snorkeling with a lot of help from a life vest and patient friends. And every time I go out there, I get an absolute high. I am constantly amazed by the sheer number and beauty of the fishes and creatures under the water. I love the sensation that comes with standing on the shoreline with the waves coming in and going out in an almost hypnotic rhythm. And I love listening to the gentle lull of waves crashing on the shore.

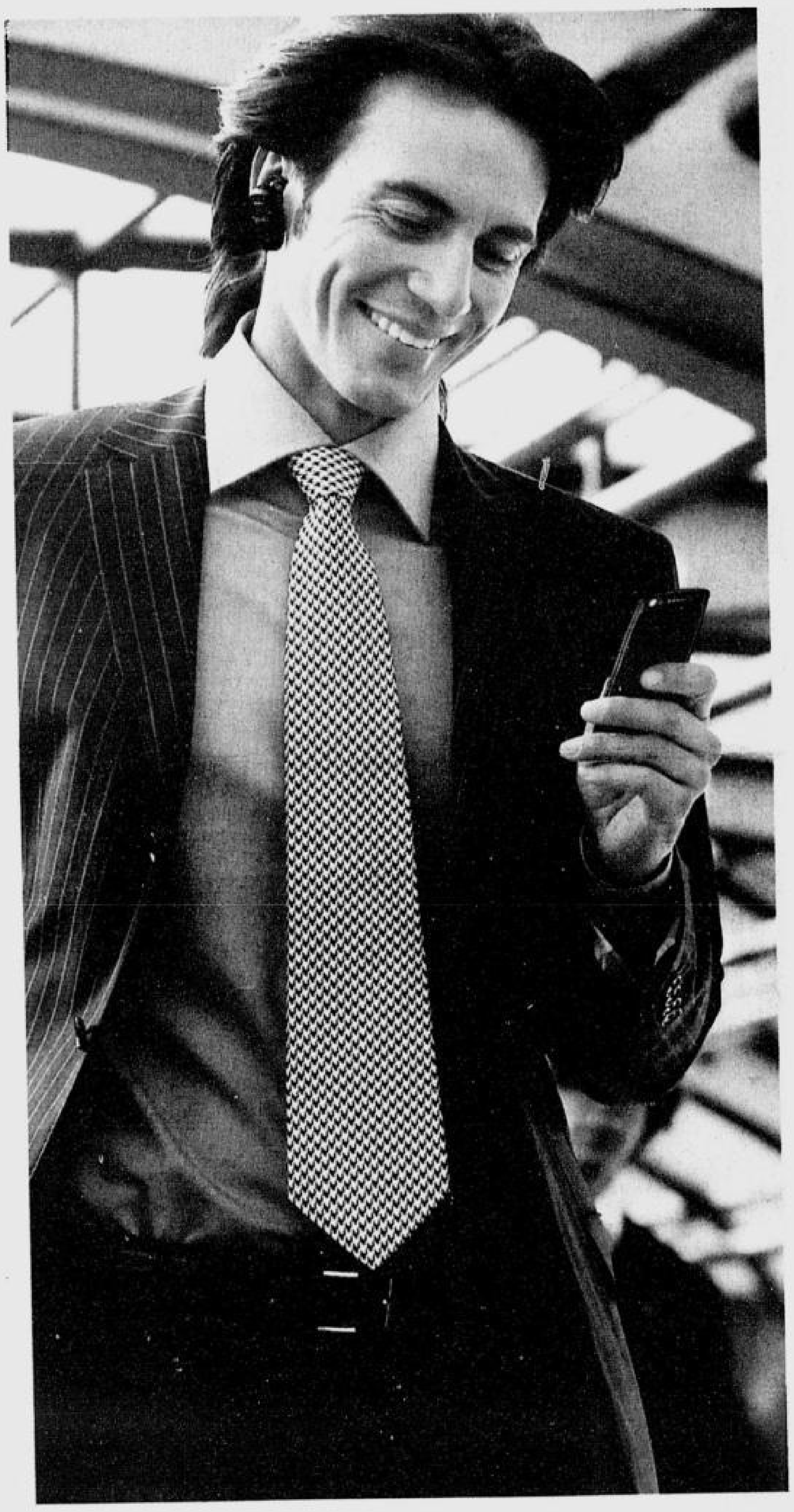
A recent trip to Puerto Galera's White Beach was no exception. If anything did change, I think I just fell in love with the beach even more. It wasn't just because the beach was breathtaking, or it was perfectly sunshine-y on our first day. It was because I met and spent time with people who had even greater love for the beach.

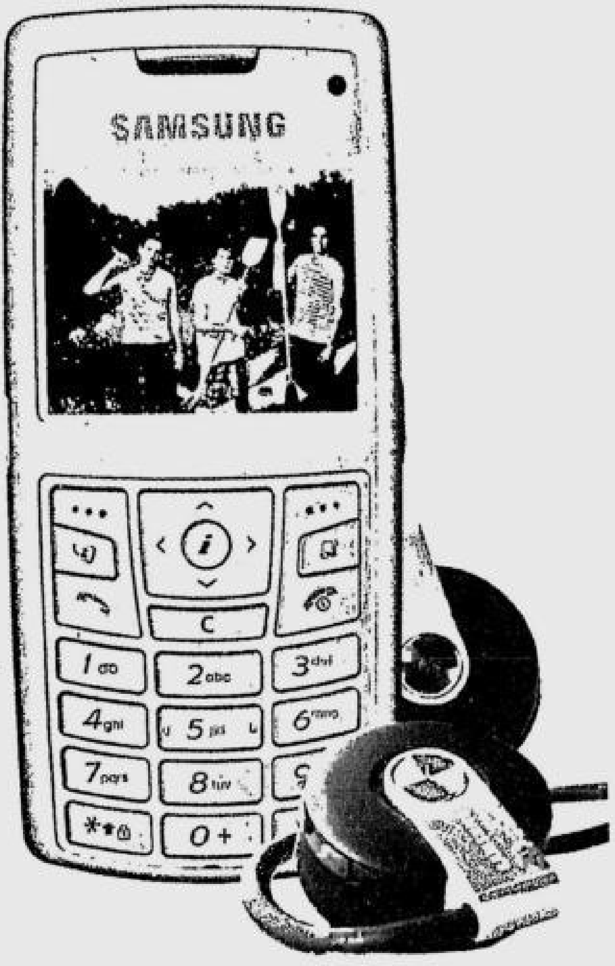
### From all over

Coming in from around Batangas and Mindoro, 250 volunteers registered on an early Saturday morning for the first leg of Nestea's Love the Beach campaign. One of the highlights of the affair was the partnership between Nestea and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), whose projects focus on the improvement of socioeconomic systems, ecological preservation, and regeneration. Under the partnership, part of the proceeds from all the sales of Nestea items during this year's Nestea Beach will benefit the cleanup and preservation of our country's beaches through PBSP's coastal rehabilitation program. And the cleanup began this March at Puerto Galera to be followed with cleanups in Ilo-

GIVE/ E7

COLLEGE freshman and sea-lover Joanna Espares didn't mind waking up early on a weekend and traveling for almost three hours just to help clean the beach.





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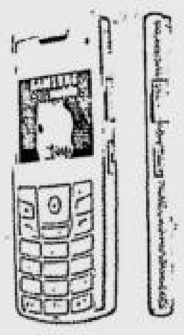

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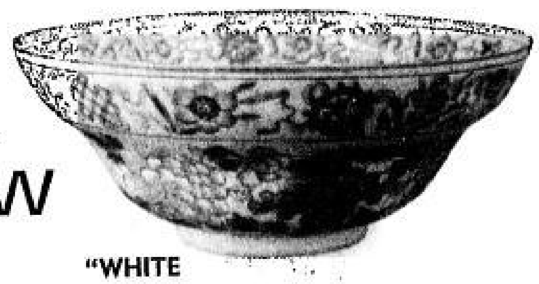
# Tsinoys then and now



"WHITE Ground Bowl"

A trip to the Ayala Museum's current exhibit called 'Chinese Diaspora: Art Streams from the Mainland' is a good way to learn something about another culture or rediscover your own

**By Walter Ang**
*2bU! Correspondent*

WHEN I INVITED A FILipino friend of mine to my clan's annual New Year reunion party a few years ago, it struck me how amazed he was at the proceedings.

To me, it was nothing out of the ordinary. It was our usual thing, a lauriat lunch at a Chinese restaurant with lazy Susans and chopsticks, everyone wearing something red and speaking a mix of Chinese, English and Tagalog, the little kids scampering to the aquariums to look at the fish, things like that.

To my friend, it was out of this world.

"I need subtitles! It's like 'Mano Po' the movie in real life!" he exclaimed.

I was happy to have shared the occasion with my friend, giving him a glimpse into the world of Tsinoys. It occurred to me that a lot of my Pinoy friends don't really get a chance to know more about what it is to be Tsinoy.

Then again, did I and my generation know enough of our own histories as well?

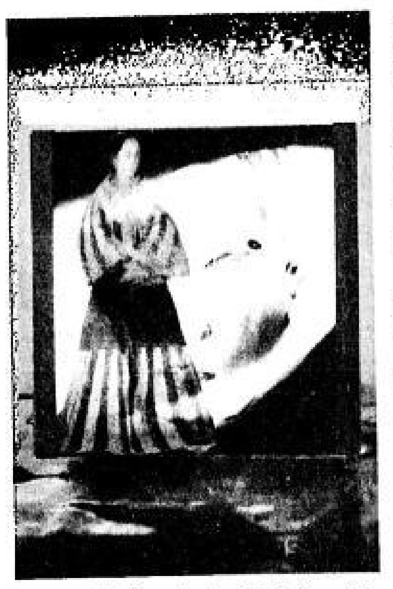
## Then

Whenever my friends ask about my family history, I can usually go as far back as my paternal grandparents' story of how they came over in boats from Fujian province just a few years before WWII, and of how my father and his eight siblings grew up in Tondo.

Growing up, I didn't ask why my grandparents, and presumably a whole wave of other mainland Chinese, decided to settle here. It was something I took for granted. After all, watching "Sesame Street" was more fun than asking about how difficult life must have been back in my grandparents' hometowns to make them want to leave.

How scary it must have been for them to stray so far from home, and how brave they must have been to start a new life in a strange new world.

These thoughts filled my mind when I visited the Ayala Museum's current exhibit "Chinese Diaspora: Art Streams from the Mainland," a six-part collection that "celebrates the extraordinary achievements of syncretic Chinese cultures in Southeast Asia."



"MARIA Clara in the Lightbox," by Valeria Cavestany

WALKING tour with Ivan ManDy in Binondo

## Exhibits

"The Peranakan Legacy," on loan from Singapore's Asian Civilizations Museum, shows the objects and furniture of Chinese who settled in Singapore. Peranakan is what Singaporeans call their Tsinoys, so to speak. I think this will appeal to Tsinoys the most because it mirrors our own experiences and attempts to hold on to our "old" culture while blending in with our "new" culture.

I like it because it showed "ordinary" stuff—everyday things used around the house like slippers, garments, altars, ceramics, etc. I found an intricate silver case for chewing betel nuts (apparently, something people of that time enjoyed doing) fascinating and funny at the same time. I wonder if a hundred years from now museums will feature bejeweled cell phone cases.

Closer to Philippine shores, the museum shows what Pinoys used to buy and trade from the Chinese before the opening of 168 Mall: a collection of close to 200 pottery and other trade ware from the Roberto T. Villanueva Collection.

On the other hand, "Tsinoy: Mestizo Art of Colonial Times" features jewelry and sculptures created by Tsinoy-Mestizo artisans and craftsmen of the 19th century. My favorites are some ornamental silver clips used for hanging mosquito nets. It seems a little silly now to use such beautiful pieces for something as mundane as mosquito nets, but there you have it!

## Art

The exhibit also features the paintings of Damian Domingo, regarded as "The First Great Filipino Painter." Domingo was a Tsinoy-Mestizo who did miniature portraits and albums of Philippine costumes. When I saw his painting of two Chinese women, their disproportionately small feet made me think of my very own grandmother whose toes are bent out of shape.

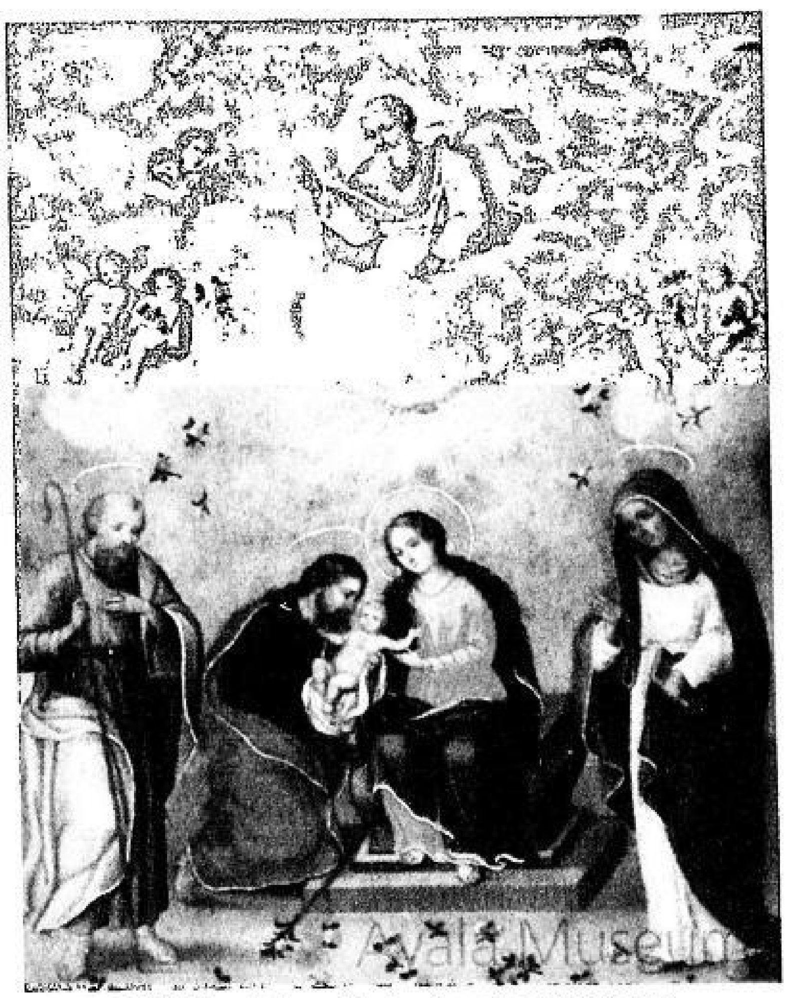
She had to suffer foot-binding when she was much younger. Thank goodness for my grandmother, this practice was discontinued when it began going out of style. Besides, according to her, her family was too poor to keep up with it. And it also hurt a lot.

In "China Gaze," Filipino-Catalan artist Valeria Cavestany showcases her mixed-media artworks inspired by her love affair with Chinese culture. Cavestany has studied Chinese history, Chinese painting, and the Mandarin language, and her artworks provide a glimpse of how someone who is from another culture views my own.

## Vibrant streets

From the serene halls of the museum, I moved to the vibrant streets of Binondo to see how the past has morphed into the present.

In conjunction with the exhibit, which runs until May 27, the museum had partnered with Ivan ManDy for a special combo-walk incorporating his regular eating tour and historical tour (www.oldmanilawalks.com).



"LA SAGRADA Familia Jesus Maria y Josep Joaquin y Aana," by Damian Domingo

Even though I grew up in Binondo, I still took the tour to visit old haunts and to see if there were new things I could discover about my hometown.

We began at a Roman Catholic church that was, ironically, the focal point of Binondo's beginnings. ManDy informed the group that the Spanish colonists had spurred Chinese migration because of their need for cheap labor. In short, they needed Chinese OFWs to work in Manila.

We came full circle as we ended the tour in a hidden, back-alley Chinese temple.

In between these bookends, ManDy took us up and down and all around the streets of Binondo, with stops at a Chinese drugstore, a family association hall, a Chinese wedding store, a combination Catholic/Taoist altar, and, yes, a Chinese factory making Spanish chocolate.

He fed our bellies with Chinese food from hole-in-the-wall joints and fed our minds with stories of scandal, tenacity, rumors, perseverance and love affairs. With his hilarious sense of humor and theatricality, it was a fun (and delicious) way to complement the museum exhibit.

It doesn't matter if you're Pinoy or Tsinoy or Whatever-noy, take a trip to the Ayala Museum to see this exhibit. At a time when the world is truly getting smaller, it's a good thing to learn something about another culture or rediscover your own.

Besides, it's only a few feet away from the Ayala malls, so it shouldn't be too hard to fit it into your weekend schedule. Plus, the jackfruit sansrival in the museum café is to die for.

The museum has a series of talks until May: March 23 features Ditas Samson, curator, and Cavestany, artist, of China Glaze; April 28 features Rita Tan, curator of the Roberto T. Villanueva Collections of Chinese and Southeast Asian Trade Ware; and May 23 features Dr. Luciano Santiago, curator of Damian Domingo: His Life, Art & Times.

*Ayala Museum is at the corner of Makati Avenue and De la Rosa St., Makati City. Call 7577117-21 or visit www.ayalamuseum.com*

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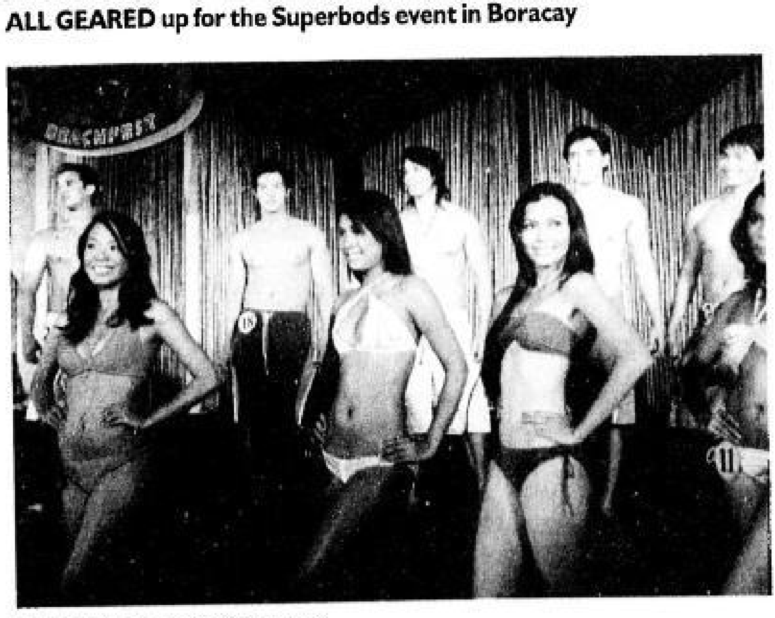
FINALISTS of the Century Tuna Superbods search

# Canned heat

**Text and photos by Bianca Consunji**
*2bUI Correspondent*

The Century Tuna Superbods 2007 Grand Finals unreels at Boracay's Pier One on April 28

ALL GEARED up for the Superbods event in Boracay



BEAUTY and healthy curves

WANT ANOTHER reason to go to Boracay aside from the talcum white sand, crystal blue water and hyperactive night scene?

Next month, Boracay's Pier One bar will be the venue for the Century Tuna Superbods 2007 Grand Finals. That's actually 24 reasons, since two dozen finalists will be vying for the crown on April 28.

The contestants were selected at the semifinal competition held last week at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza. Twelve men and 12 women were chosen from hundreds of aspiring models who showed up at the initial casting call in Embassy.

The celebrity judges of the competition were TV host and talent manager Boy Abunda, director Lauren Dyogi, Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng of Summit Publications, ABS-CBN Publishing's Ernie Lopez, fashion photographer Sara Black, PC&V Communications' vice president Ariel Comia, and Century Tuna marketing manager Ayet Evangelista.

The event was hosted by Joey Mead and Rovilson Fernandez.

The Century Tuna Superbods 2007 search aims to discover the next male and female image models who personify the brand's qualities. They must possess a lean, fit body and practice a healthy lifestyle to qualify.

The 12 male finalists who made the cut are: Andrew Smith, 21; Pierre Niccolo Fabi, 26; Jerome Ortiz, 26; Alexander Poe, 23; John Tiuseco, 22; Joe Vince Cañisarez, 23; Larry Bril, 24; Raphael Keifer, 22; Silvester Sagad, 21; James Zablan, 27; Mico Lara, 24; and Alison Andres, 21.

The women on the list are: Monaliza Neuboeck, 22, Dominique Dabao, 17; Lotus van Heddegem, 19; Kristine Pearl Ladera, 18; Jamie Diago, 18; Tricia Velasco, 28; Joyce So, 22; Jam Lamigo, 24; Dorothy Aragye, 25; Patricia Ortega, 23; Julia Duncan, 26; and Mica Tuaño, 28.

JUDGES Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng, Boy Abunda and Sara Black

JUDGES Ernie Lopez and Lauren Dyogi

STRIKING a pose for the judges

The 24 finalists went home with all-expense-paid trips to Boracay to compete at the finals, with transportation courtesy of Seair.

Want to compete but missed the first go-see? Six wild-card contestants will be selected in Boracay to join the 24 other finalists. The wild-card go-see will be held at the Century Tuna Superbods Beachfest on April 28, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Pier One in Boracay.

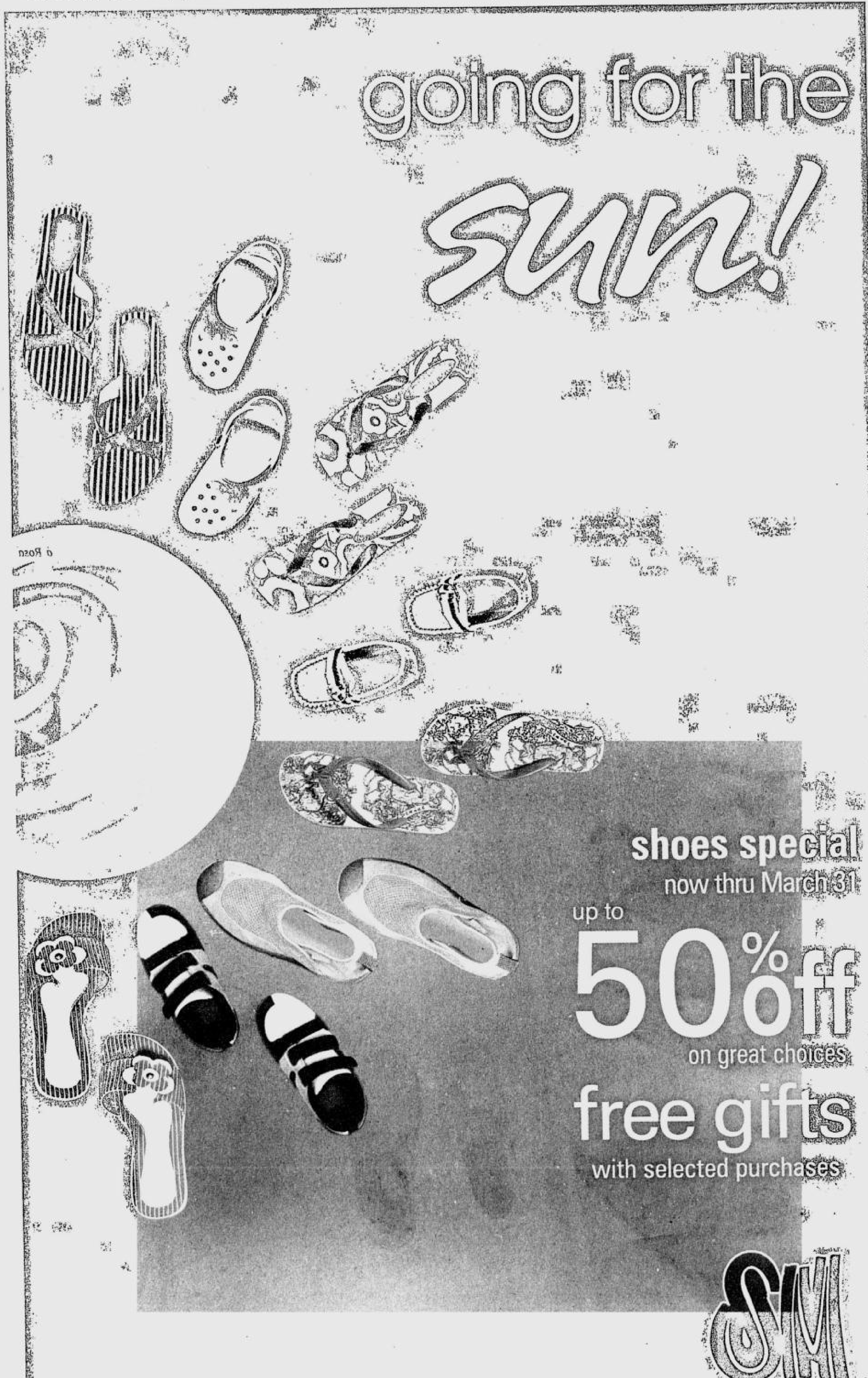
The two winners of the Century Tuna Superbods 2007 Grand Finals will take home half a million pesos in cash each, plus a one-year modeling contract with Century Tuna. Readers can also win a free trip to Boracay to watch the finals. Visit www.centurysuperbods.ph.

# Feet fashion

## get the summer look at SM DEPARTMENT STORE

**Where you are going and what you will be doing determine your choice of summer foot fashion.**

Something about summer lures us all to be a bit more carefree, and a lot more trendy. To make sure that you enjoy each and every delicious moment in comfort and style, SM Department Store is showcasing the trendiest footwear collection — all inspired by the season's varied activities.



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### going for the *flair*

For the city dweller out to catch some sun, the chic-est footwear choices are at SM Ladies' Shoes Department.

Wedges are clearly among the most fashionable picks. Their smart versatility makes them look great with any length of skirt or dress.

Flats and strappy, low-heeled sandals go well with capri pants. And, since summertime is about taking it easy, even flip-flops would be just fine to wear to dinner!

### going for the *look*

The rising temperature challenges men to step out in style. Finding the right shoes for the right look could prove real tricky. Leather sandals are classic choices since they have worked their way from the beach to the top of the fashion chain.

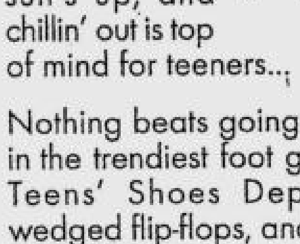
For the sporty set, loafers and sneakers are appropriate for jeans, T-shirts and polos. Find the right pair for the right outfit at SM Men's Shoes Department.

### going for the *trend*

School's over, sun's up, and chillin' out is top of mind for teeners...

Nothing beats going to the beach in the trendiest foot gear. Visit SM Teens' Shoes Department for wedged flip-flops, and sandals and aqua shoes that are low in heels but definitely high in style.

### going for the *fun*



To the kiddies, summer is a time of infinite possibilities... romping in the grass, beachcombing with mom and dad, or playing with friends.

SM Children's Shoes Department carries the cutest collection of summer shoes, sporting prints and colors right out of the crayon box... every pair allowing busy little feet to "breathe" while keeping them safe and comfortable all summer long.

**Prime yourself for the chill-out season! Visit the SM Department Store nearest you and take your pick from the store's terrific summer footwear collection.**

going for the *look!*

men's

# going for the *sun!*

teens'

going for the *trend!*

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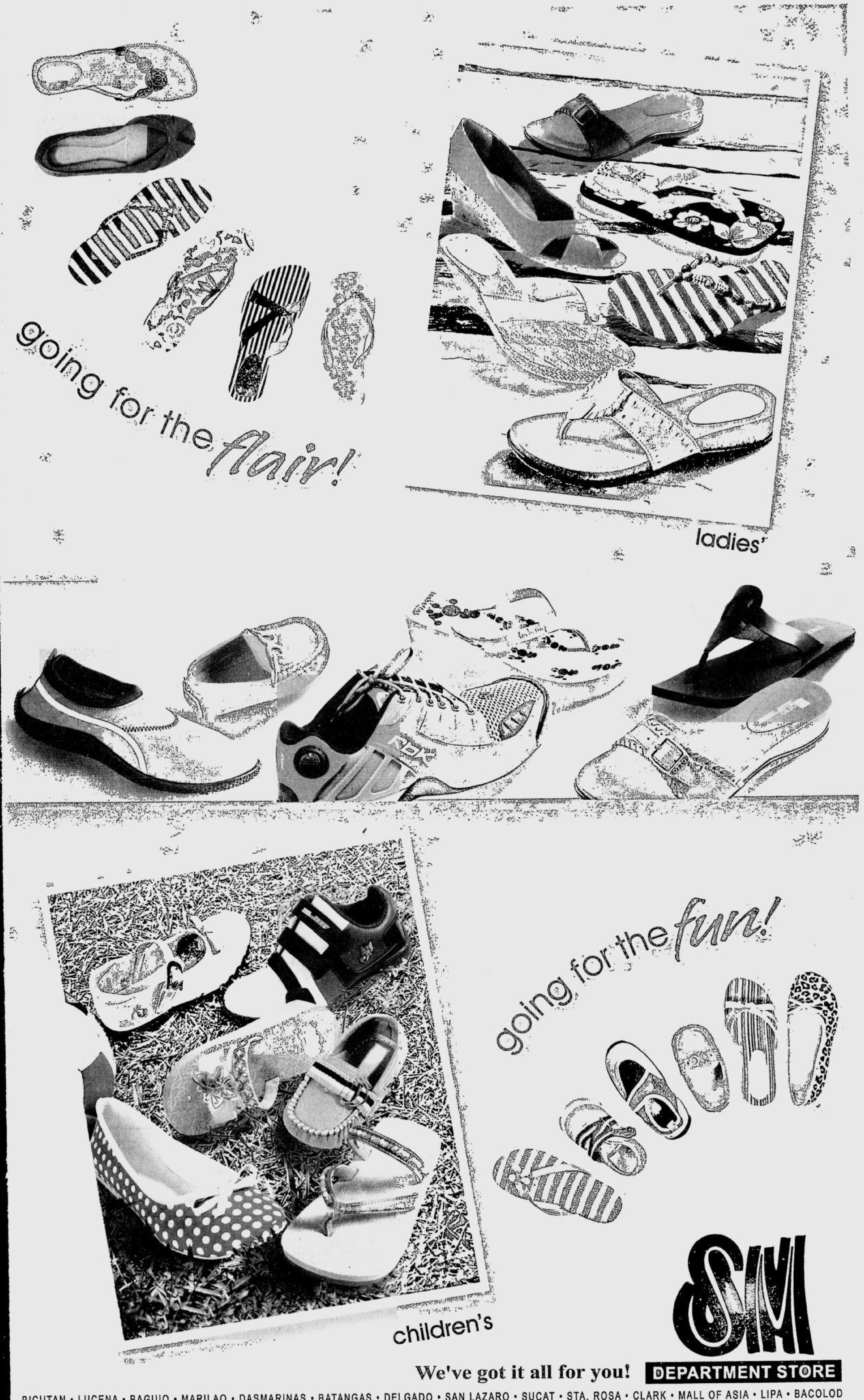
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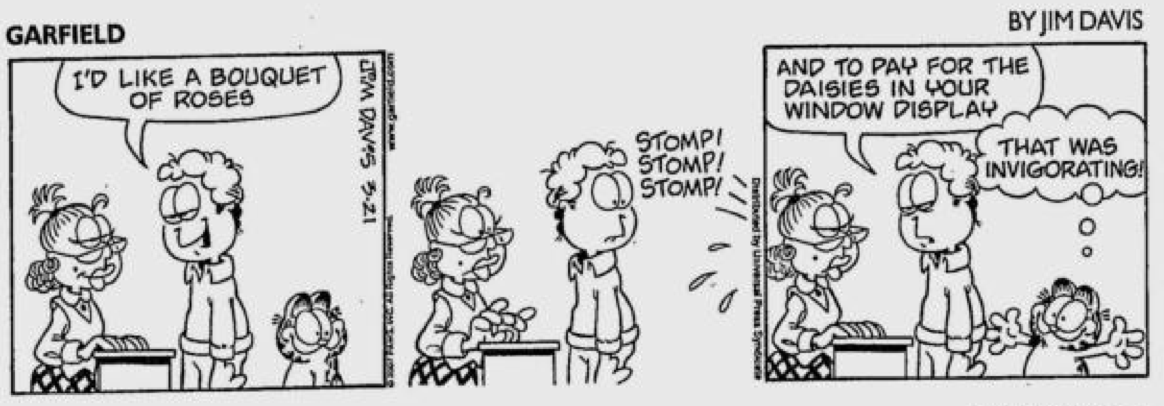
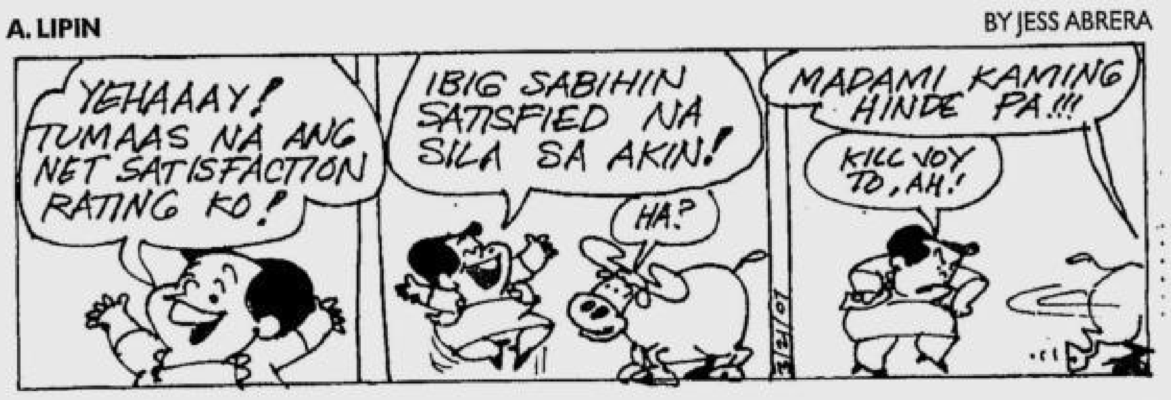
## GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I'D LIKE A BOUQUET OF ROSES
STOMP! STOMP! STOMP!
AND TO PAY FOR THE DAISIES IN YOUR WINDOW DISPLAY
THAT WAS INVIGORATING!

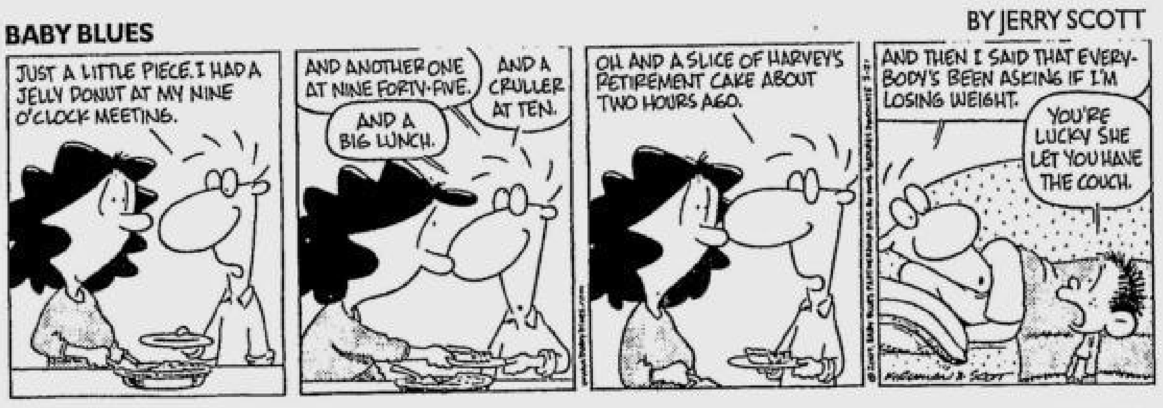
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


YEHAAAY! TUMAAS NA ANG NET SATISFACTION RATING KO!
IBIG SABIHIN SATISFIED NA SILA SA AKIN!
HA?
MADAMI KAMING HINDE PA!!!
KILL JOY TO, AH!

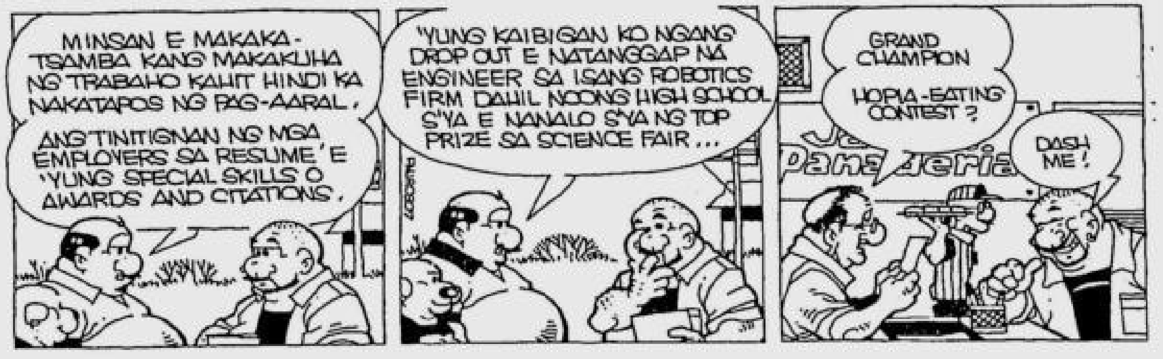
## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


JUST A LITTLE PIECE. I HAD A JELLY DONUT AT MY NINE O'CLOCK MEETING.
AND ANOTHER ONE AT NINE FORTY-FIVE.
AND A BIG LUNCH.
AND A CRULLER AT TEN.
OH AND A SLICE OF HARVEY'S RETIREMENT CAKE ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO.
AND THEN I SAID THAT EVERYBODY'S BEEN ASKING IF I'M LOSING WEIGHT.
YOU'RE LUCKY SHE LET YOU HAVE THE COUCH.

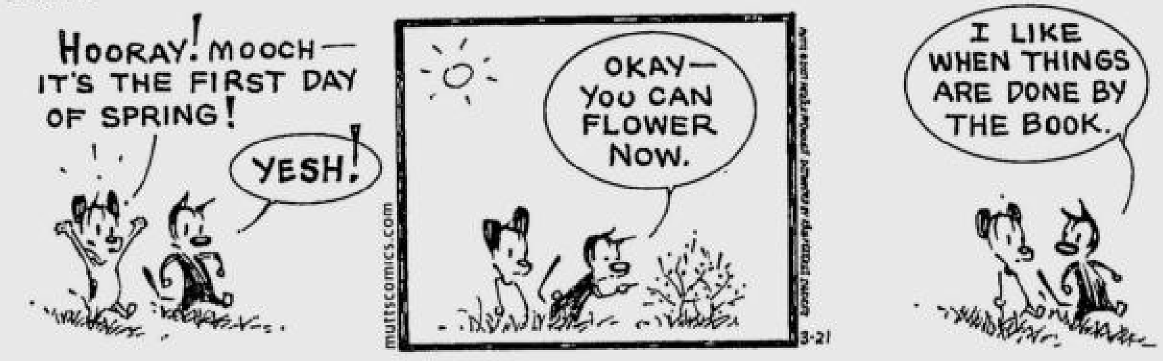
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MINSAN E MAKAKA-TSAMBA KANG MAKAKUHA NG TRABAHO KAHIT HINDI KA NAKATAPOS NG PAG-AARAL.
ANG TINITIGNAN NG MGA EMPLOYERS SA RESUME' E 'YUNG SPECIAL SKILLS O AWARDS AND CITATIONS.
'YUNG KAIBIGAN KO NGANG DROP OUT E NATANGGAP NA ENGINEER SA ISANG ROBOTICS FIRM DAHIL NOONG HIGH SCHOOL S'YA E NANALO S'YA NG TOP PRIZE SA SCIENCE FAIR...
GRAND CHAMPION HOPIA-EATING CONTEST?
DASH ME!

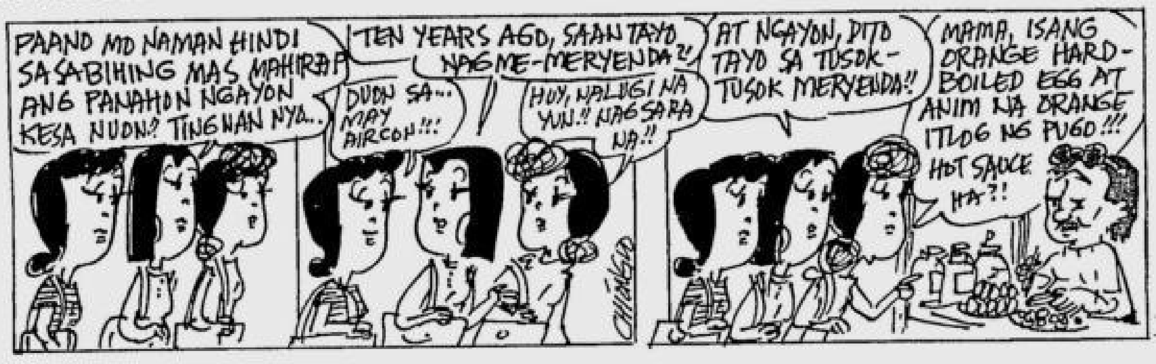
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HOORAY! MOOCH— IT'S THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING!
YESH!
OKAY— YOU CAN FLOWER NOW.
muttscomics.com
3-21
I LIKE WHEN THINGS ARE DONE BY THE BOOK.

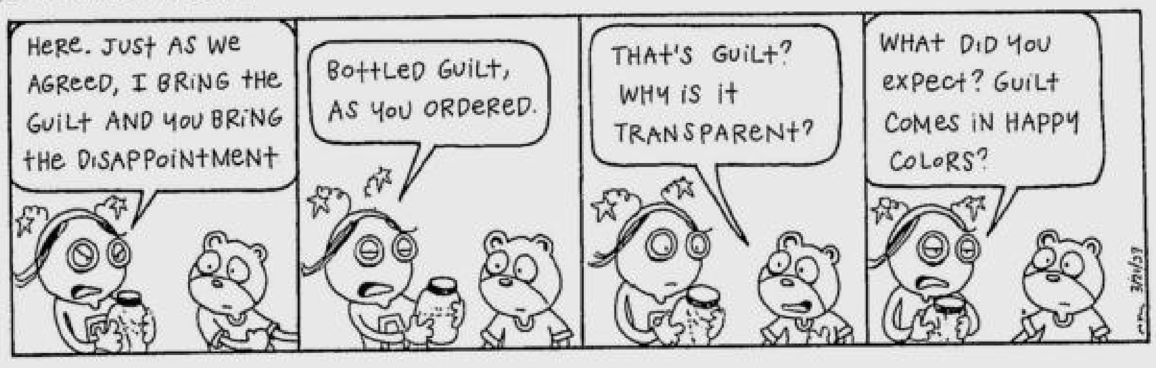
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PAANO MO NAMAN HINDI SASABIHING MAS MAHIRAP ANG PANAHON NGAYON KESA NUON? TINGNAN NYA..
TEN YEARS AGO, SAAN TAYO NAGME-MERYENDA?!
DUON SA... MAY AIRCON!!!
HUY, NALUGI NA YUN!! NAGSARA NA!!
AT NGAYON, DITO TAYO SA TUSOK-TUSOK MERYENDA!!
MAMA, ISANG ORANGE HARD-BOILED EGG AT ANIM NA ORANGE ITLOG NG PUGO!!!
HOT SAUCE HA?!

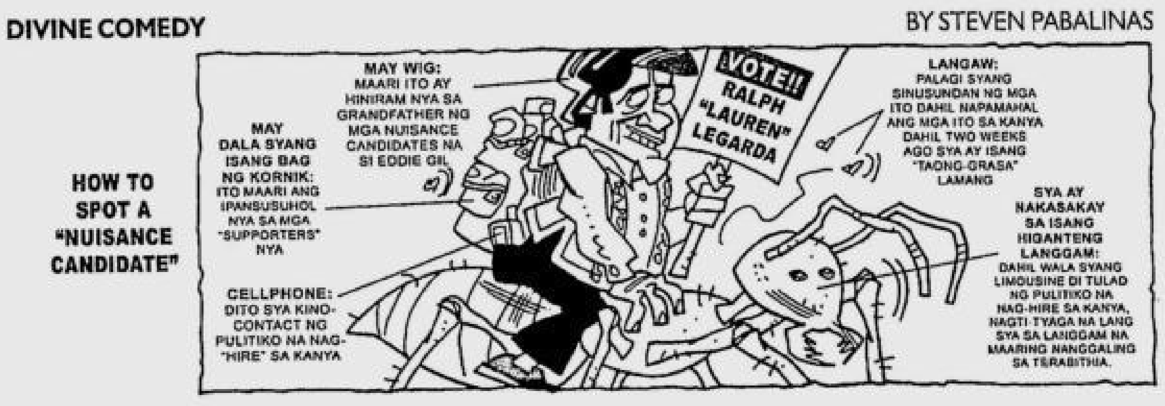
## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HERE. JUST AS WE AGREED, I BRING THE GUILT AND YOU BRING THE DISAPPOINTMENT
BOTTLED GUILT, AS YOU ORDERED.
THAT'S GUILT? WHY IS IT TRANSPARENT?
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? GUILT COMES IN HAPPY COLORS?

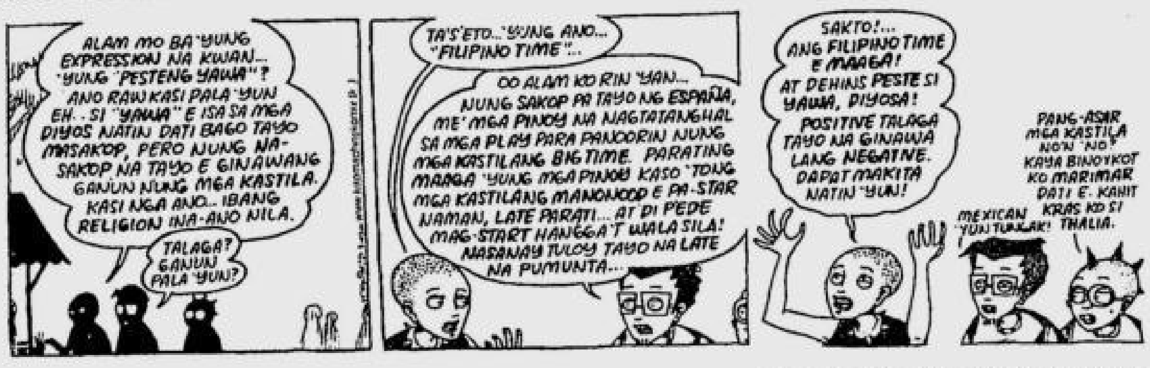
## DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HOW TO SPOT A "NUISANCE CANDIDATE"
MAY WIG: MAARI ITO AY HINIRAM NYA SA GRANDFATHER NG MGA NUISANCE CANDIDATES NA SI EDDIE GIL
MAY DALA SYANG ISANG BAG NG KORNIK: ITO MAARI ANG IPANSUSUHOL NYA SA MGA "SUPPORTERS" NYA
CELLPHONE: DITO SYA KINO-CONTACT NG PULITIKO NA NAG-"HIRE" SA KANYA
VOTE!! RALPH "LAUREN" LEGARDA
LANGAW: PALAGI SYANG SINUSUNDAN NG MGA ITO DAHIL NAPAMAHAL ANG MGA ITO SA KANYA DAHIL TWO WEEKS AGO SYA AY ISANG "TAONG-GRASA" LAMANG
SYA AY NAKASAKAY SA ISANG HIGANTENG LANGGAM: DAHIL WALA SYANG LIMOUSINE DI TULAD NG PULITIKO NA NAG-HIRE SA KANYA, NAGTI-TYAGA NA LANG SYA SA LANGGAM NA MAARING NANGGALING SA TERABITHIA.

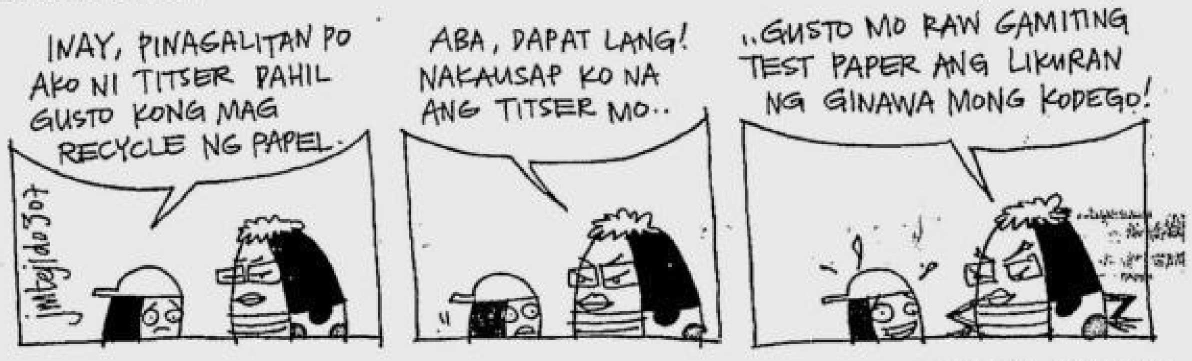
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ALAM MO BA 'YUNG EXPRESSION NA KWAN... 'YUNG "PESTENG YAWA"? ANO RAW KASI PALA 'YUN EH.. SI "YAWA" E ISA SA MGA DIYOS NATIN DATI BAGO TAYO MASAKOP, PERO NUNG NASAKOP NA TAYO E GINAWANG GANUN NUNG MGA KASTILA. KASI NGA ANO.. IBANG RELIGION INA-ANO NILA.
TALAGA? GANUN PALA 'YUN?
TA'S ETO.. 'YUNG ANO... "FILIPINO TIME"...
OO ALAM KO RIN 'YAN... NUNG SAKOP PA TAYO NG ESPAÑA, ME' MGA PINOY NA NAGTATANGHAL SA MGA PLAY PARA PANOORIN NUNG MGA KASTILANG BIGTIME. PARATING MAAGA 'YUNG MGA PINOY KASO 'TONG MGA KASTILANG MANONOOD E PA-STAR NAMAN, LATE PARATI... AT DI PEDE MAG-START HANGGA'T WALA SILA! NASANAY TULOY TAYO NA LATE NA PUMUNTA...
SAKTO!... ANG FILIPINO TIME E MAAGA! AT DEHINS PESTE SI YAWA, DIYOSA! POSITIVE TALAGA TAYO NA GINAWA LANG NEGATIVE. DAPAT MAKITA NATIN 'YUN!
MEXICAN 'YUN TUKLAK!
PANG-ASAR MGA KASTILA NOON "NO" KAYA BINOYKOT KO MARIMAR DATI E. KAHIT KRAS KO SI THALIA.

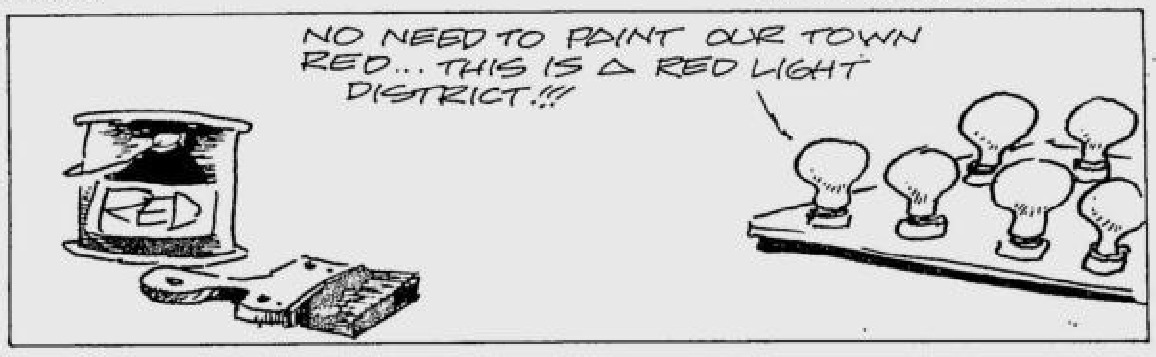
## MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, PINAGALITAN PO AKO NI TITSER DAHIL GUSTO KONG MAG RECYCLE NG PAPEL.
ABA, DAPAT LANG! NAKAUSAP KO NA ANG TITSER MO..
..GUSTO MO RAW GAMITING TEST PAPER ANG LIKURAN NG GINAWA MONG KODEGO!

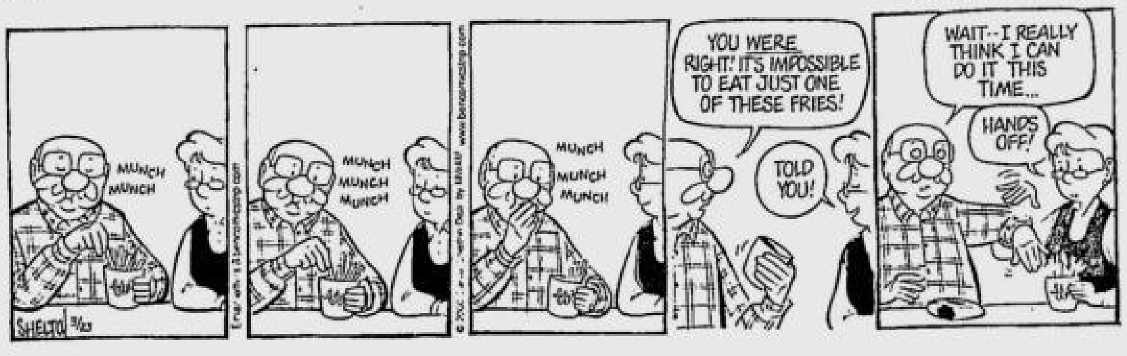
## TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NO NEED TO PAINT OUR TOWN RED... THIS IS A RED LIGHT DISTRICT!!!
RED

## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
YOU WERE RIGHT! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO EAT JUST ONE OF THESE FRIES!
TOLD YOU!
WAIT--I REALLY THINK I CAN DO IT THIS TIME...
HANDS OFF!

## DAILY CROSSWORD

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ■ | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | ■ | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 |  |  |  | ■ | 15 |  |  |  | ■ | 16 |  |  |  |  |
| 17 |  |  |  | ■ | 18 |  |  |  | ■ | 19 |  |  |  |  |
| 20 |  |  |  | 21 |  |  |  |  | 22 |  |  |  |  |  |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | 23 |  |  | ■ | ■ | 24 |  |  | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | ■ | 28 |  | 29 | 30 | ■ | 31 |  | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 |
| 36 |  |  | 37 | ■ | 38 |  |  | 39 | ■ | 40 |  |  |  |  |
| 41 |  |  |  | 42 |  |  |  |  | 43 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 44 |  |  |  |  | ■ | 45 |  |  |  | ■ | 46 |  |  |  |
| 47 |  |  |  |  | 48 | ■ | 49 |  |  | 50 | ■ | 51 |  |  |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | 52 |  | 53 | ■ | ■ | 54 |  | 55 | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 |  |  |  | 60 | 61 |  |  |  | 62 | 63 | 64 |
| 65 |  |  |  |  | ■ | 66 |  |  |  | ■ | 67 |  |  |  |
| 68 |  |  |  |  | ■ | 69 |  |  |  | ■ | 70 |  |  |  |
| 71 |  |  |  |  | ■ | 72 |  |  |  | ■ | 73 |  |  |  |

By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

3/21/07

### ACROSS

- 1 Wild guess
- 5 Supply of BB's
- 9 Employees
- 14 Leslie Caron film
- 15 French evening
- 16 __ Nadu, India
- 17 Track shape
- 18 Gives a bad review to
- 19 Contest site
- 20 Daunting task for a lepidopterist?
- 23 Dinghy mover
- 24 Opp. of SSW
- 25 Healthy spot
- 28 __ avis
- 31 Privileged classes
- 36 Fitzgerald or Raines
- 38 Memorandum
- 40 Battery part
- 41 Daunting task for an urbanist?
- 44 Nonsensical
- 45 Guessed figs.
- 46 Trig function
- 47 Make a claim
- 49 Tex-Mex staple
- 51 Neighbor of Syr.
- 52 Edge
- 54 Manipulate
- 56 Daunting task for an artist?
- 65 Short summary
- 66 Boxer Oscar __ Hoya
- 67 Quiz choice
- 68 Eel at a sushi bar
- 69 Radiate
- 70 Tobacco kiln
- 71 Delaware senator
- 72 Easy gait
- 73 Favorites

### DOWN

- 1 Traffic caution
- 2 Digital recorder
- 3 Winglike
- 4 Phil Silvers' TV role
- 5 Hopeful
- 6 Protective ditch
- 7 Ho Chi __ City
- 8 Director Welles
- 9 Regional regulation
- 10 Fictional plantation
- 11 Prayer's conclusion
- 12 Hunky-dory
- 13 Level
- 21 Combat
- 22 Article in Arles
- 25 Brown tint
- 26 Designs
- 27 Rap-sheet word
- 29 Ludwig Mies van der __
- 30 Banned big bang
- 32 Roadside retreats
- 33 Japanese gateway
- 34 Idyllic gardens
- 35 Passover meal
- 37 Bancroft or Meara
- 39 James of R&B
- 42 Maryland player
- 43 Kiss
- 48 __-tac-toe
- 50 Buckeyes' sch.
- 53 Sample house
- 55 Bar, legally
- 56 Trounce
- 57 "Aurora" fresco painter Guido
- 58 USMA word
- 59 Carry on, as a war
- 60 "Nautilus" skipper
- 61 Fastener
- 62 "Dies __"
- 63 Depose
- 64 New Jersey team

### Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | A | D | G | E | ■ | A | S | S | T | S | ■ | C | A | T |
| A | N | E | A | R | ■ | S | A | M | O | A | ■ | A | G | O |
| J | I | M | R | O | C | K | F | O | R | D | ■ | M | A | S |
| U | T | O | P | I | A | ■ | E | R | N | ■ | M | E | S | S |
| N | A | N | ■ | C | S | A | ■ | E | U | R | O | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | H | A | I | K | U | ■ | P | E | L | T | E | D |
| O | B | O | E | ■ | N | I | B | S | ■ | G | I | R | L | Y |
| R | E | M | I | N | G | T | O | N | S | T | E | E | L | E |
| B | E | A | R | D | ■ | A | L | O | T | ■ | R | E | E | D |
| S | T | R | E | A | K | ■ | T | O | R | M | E | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | S | K | E | W | ■ | P | E | A | ■ | C | A | R |
| S | A | M | S | ■ | B | O | O | ■ | A | R | M | A | D | A |
| P | R | O | ■ | H | A | R | R | Y | M | C | G | R | A | W |
| A | L | S | ■ | A | B | L | E | R | ■ | I | R | E | N | E |
| M | O | S | ■ | M | S | D | O | S | ■ | A | S | T | O | R |

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3/21/07

## HOROSCOPE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You're a dreamer and an experimenter. You definitely explore new turf. You are quietly confident and march to your own drummer. You need to express yourself, and you have the courage to do so. You have an excellent understanding of structure and organizations. You see relationships where others do not. Expect a wonderfully social year ahead that beautifully promotes all partnerships.
**Birthdate of:** Johann Sebastian Bach, organist/composer; Timothy Dalton, actor; Rosie O'Donnell, comedian/actress.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** This is a good day to go shopping for beautiful things for yourself and for loved ones. It's also a good day to boost your earnings. Don't be afraid to act on your money-making ideas.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Enjoy the company of loved ones, partners and close friends today. The Moon is in your sign, and it's making a lovely dance with Venus. It's a feel-good day!

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** Solitude in beautiful surroundings will please you today. It's also a good day to deal with the government and large institutions (excellent for signing contracts).

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** Enjoy the company of friends and groups today. In particular, a female friend might need your advice or your companionship. All relations with women will go well today.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** This is a good day to ask your boss or any other authority figure in your life for a favor or for approval for something you want to do. People easily respect you today.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** Try to push the sides of the envelope a little bit today. You'll enjoy learning anything new or experiencing something different. Talk to people from different backgrounds and other countries

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** The wealth of others can benefit you today. Now is the time to ask for a loan or a mortgage, or to borrow anything that you want from someone else.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** Use today's planetary influence to patch up differences with partners and friends. It's very easy to establish a nice give-and-take with others.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Coworkers are unusually supportive today. You might as well milk this for all it's worth. If you need someone's help, just ask for it.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** What a lovely day to socialize and schmooze with friends. Catch a game, watch a movie or enjoy social outings with others.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Home-decorating projects and buying something beautiful for where you live are good activities to explore today. This is also a great day for family discussions or entertaining at home.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Be open to agreement and signing contracts today. Discussions with siblings can go particularly well. People are friendly and cooperative today.

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

### Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | 6 | 3 | 1 |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |
|  | 4 |  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  | 2 |  |  | 8 | 3 |
| 2 |  |  |  |  | 6 | 4 |  | 5 |
|  | 6 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  | 5 |  |
|  |  |  | 4 | 8 | 7 | 9 |  |  |

Difficulty Level ★★★

3/21

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### HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 7 |
| 3 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 8 |
| 7 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 5 |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| 2 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 9 |

Difficulty Level ★★

3-20

# Big is beautiful

By Anna Oposa

I WAS ONLY 11 WHEN I FIRST stepped inside a club. My older cousins dressed me up in a miniskirt, heels, and dabbed a little makeup on me.

"How old does she look?" Ate Ana asked her friend. He glanced at my big boobs, big thighs, big butt, big nose, and tiny waist.

"Nineteen," he replied. I felt big and beautiful.

A year after, we were taught about that phase of a teenager's life when certain body parts grow faster or slower than others, what science calls puberty. At 12 years old, I was 5'2" with my huge boobs, round butt, and fleshy hips and thighs. The size of my nose wasn't right for the size of my other facial features.

However, my teachers failed to inform us how insecurity was a pathological part of puberty. They failed to warn us about the cruel kids who enjoyed picking on the insecurities of others. This time, I no longer felt big and beautiful. I just felt... big.

To solve this problem, I lived in the gym two hours a day, six times a week. I weighed my food to know its exact calorie content and wrote down everything that entered my mouth. It became difficult to eat out or eat with friends in school. After a year and a half, I lost body fat but not my curves.

And, oh, my nose! My nose couldn't lose weight! The way out was a nose job which I constantly bugged my parents about. In family reunions, I often sat down with my uncle-slash-reconstructive surgeon and aunt-slash-ENT doctor to consult them about rhinoplasty. I swore to my 15-year-old self that the summer after I turned 18, I would get a nose job and find a way to ditch the inches of my lower body: liposuction, meso lipo, lipo dissolve—whatever technology could offer.

I turned 19 last month. I haven't gone under the knife. I don't plan to anymore.

## Brutally honest

When I was 15 and 17, I taught musical theater to children for a summer workshop. Kids, known to be innocently yet brutally honest, gave me hugs and covered me with kisses.

"You're beautiful, Teacher Anna!" they'd say with their toothless grins. "You're so huggable!"

the dove
self-esteem
fund

I grew more passionate about musical theater. I didn't have to be telegenic, I just had to be right for a particular role. As an actor, I learned that my tools were my voice and my body. I had to build stamina and endurance for days when I had to do three shows in a row.

Taking good care of my voice and body eliminated eating cold treats, dairy products and junk food—an instant healthy diet. Whenever I mentioned thoughts of getting a nose job, my voice teacher and co-actors would say the same thing. "It will change the way you sound. Do you want that?"

Besides, they'd add, there was nothing wrong with it.

At 16, I took a creative writing workshop in New York, the city that welcomes all shapes, colors and sizes. The full-figured women from the Bronx taught me a thing or two about confidence just by strutting down the streets like they were runways. My exercise obsession was forced to stop because I had no access to a gym. Getting good grades moved up my priority list. I might have gained 15 pounds, but I added a gleaming 4.0 average to my college application forms.

To quote my 5'10" best friend Fiona: "If great things come in small packages, well, greater things come in bigger packages"

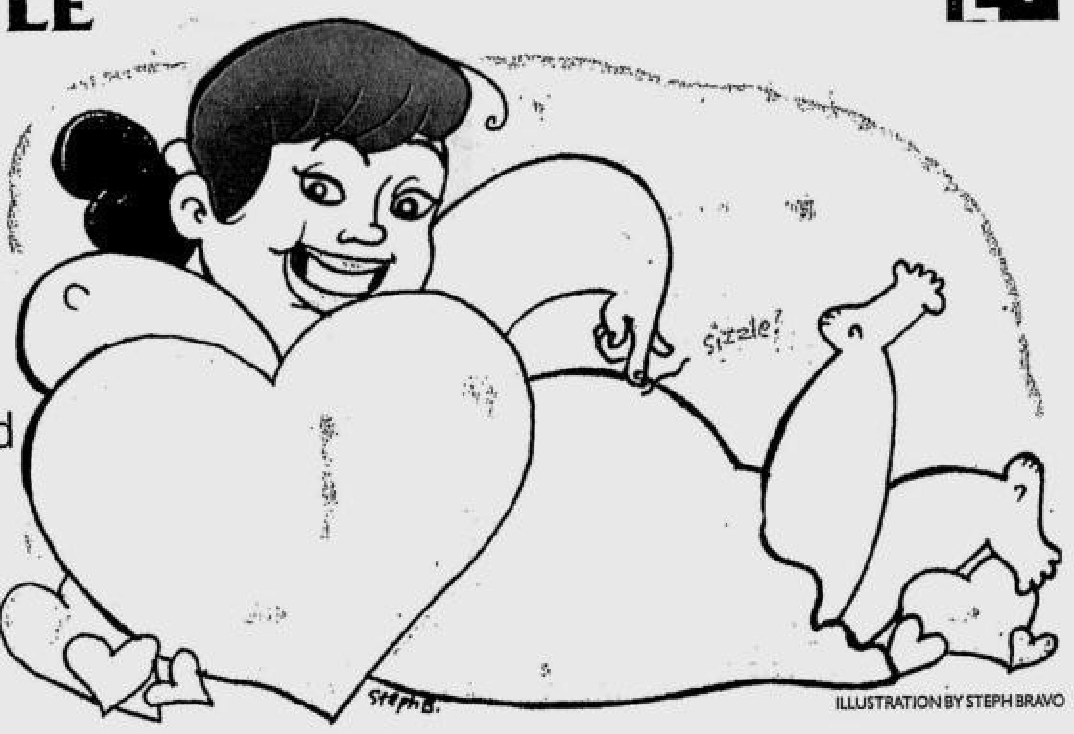


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

## My asset

My commitment to the beauty of language and the magic of the stage thus taught me to love my body and, consequently, to love myself.

My butt is my asset. In high school, I couldn't walk across the classroom without a girlfriend pinching or slapping it. They'd tease, "share *naman* some of that!" or "*buti ka pa meron*!" In one rehearsal, the stage manager went on stage and grabbed my butt. "Oh, wow! It's real!" she exclaimed happily.

My strong and lean thighs supported six years of dance lessons, dance competitions, and cheerleading. While my skinny-legged friends cried from sprains and fractures, my legs never gave up on me.

My schoolmates ran into a former teacher who told them, "*Sabihin niyo kay* Anna miss *ko na siya at ang kanyang malaking pata*!"

My hips are equipped for childbearing. My nose knows that change will affect not only the way I look, but also the way I sing. I can't have that if I want to pursue theater.

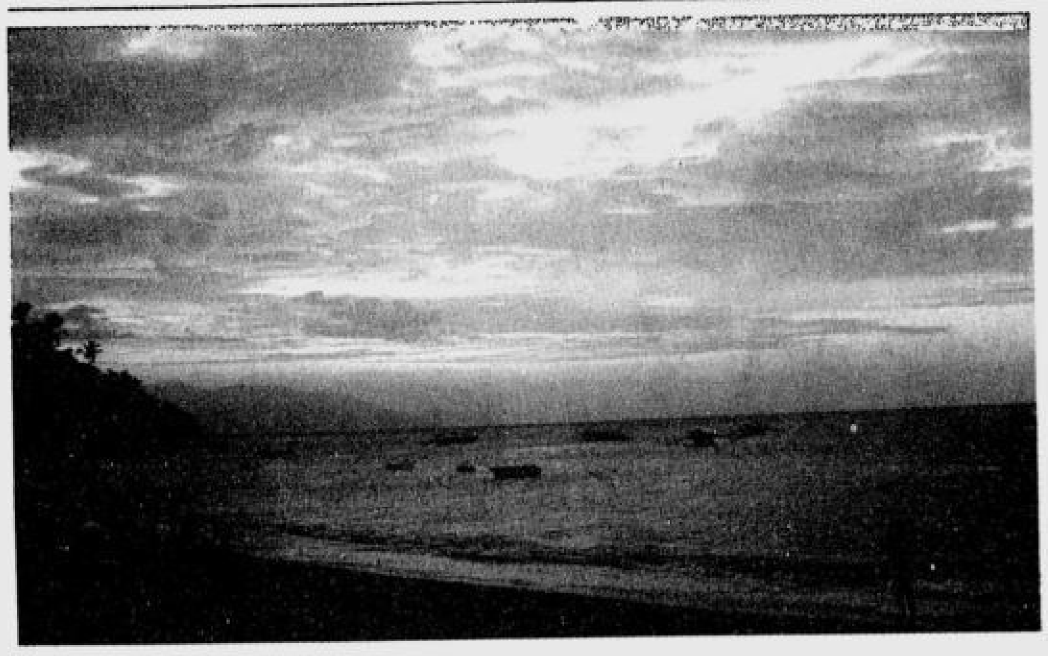
I once accused my boyfriend of being stingy with compliments. He simply replied, "Anns, I don't need to remind you that you're beautiful or you're sexy. You already know just how beautiful and sexy you are."

I do feel confident and comfortable about the width of my hips, the valley of my waist, the curve of my butt, the size of my nose, the slope of my breasts. Women spend insane amounts of money adding inches to their busts and butts. I'll never have to.

My boobs and my nose were inherited from my dad's side, my hips and thighs from my mom's. I carry them in my body wherever I go. You see, beauty comes in different packages. Mine came big.

To quote my 5'10" best friend Fiona: "If great things come in small packages, well, greater things come in bigger packages."

Big is strong. Big is sexy. Big is beautiful!



BREATHTAKINGLY beautiful and serene—just as it should be

NESTEA'S Love the Beach volunteers armed with their rakes and garbage bags braved the midday sun to make sure not a single trash gets left behind.

# Give back to the beach

From page E1

ilo and Boracay.

"Four years ago we had the Love the Beach campaign, but it was never rolled out. Since we are also using the beach for our own beach volley games, we decided that we had to do something about it. We felt that we should also help out in the other beaches. That is why we are now donating part of the proceeds to the PBSP," Nestle AVP and Nestea consumer marketing manager Tina Samaco said.

Having had my fair share of discarded bottles and empty wrappers on past strolls along the beach, I think it's high time people took a conscious effort to do something about the widespread problem with trash. The sad fact is that most of us have taken on this bad habit of discarding our garbage just about anywhere.

From kids who grew up littering their candy wrappers to adults who deliberately forget about beer bottles and whatnot everywhere, we have a whole population who seems to be unmindful of what their little actions can do.

Fortunately, a good few do know just how important it is to do something about the problem at hand. Nestle events officer Gabby Posadas said that in his recent conversations with professional divers, their assessment is that the situation on beaches is very bleak. "It's almost as if it's hopeless because of number one ignorance—lack of awareness, and of course lack of political will amongst the people to essentially keep the beaches clean. Every so often these professional divers do cleanups in different areas like Anilao and every time they do so, they find new trash every single time."

THE beach lovin' folks from Nestle: Nestle Events Specialist Gabby Posadas, AVP and Nestea consumer marketing manager Tina Samaco, and Nestea brand activation specialist Ronald Chuacokiong

## Act of love

The desire to give something back to the beaches is what fuels the Love the Beach campaign. But for the volunteers who took jeepneys, tricycles, and on some instances, even ferries just to go out and help, it was a true act of love.

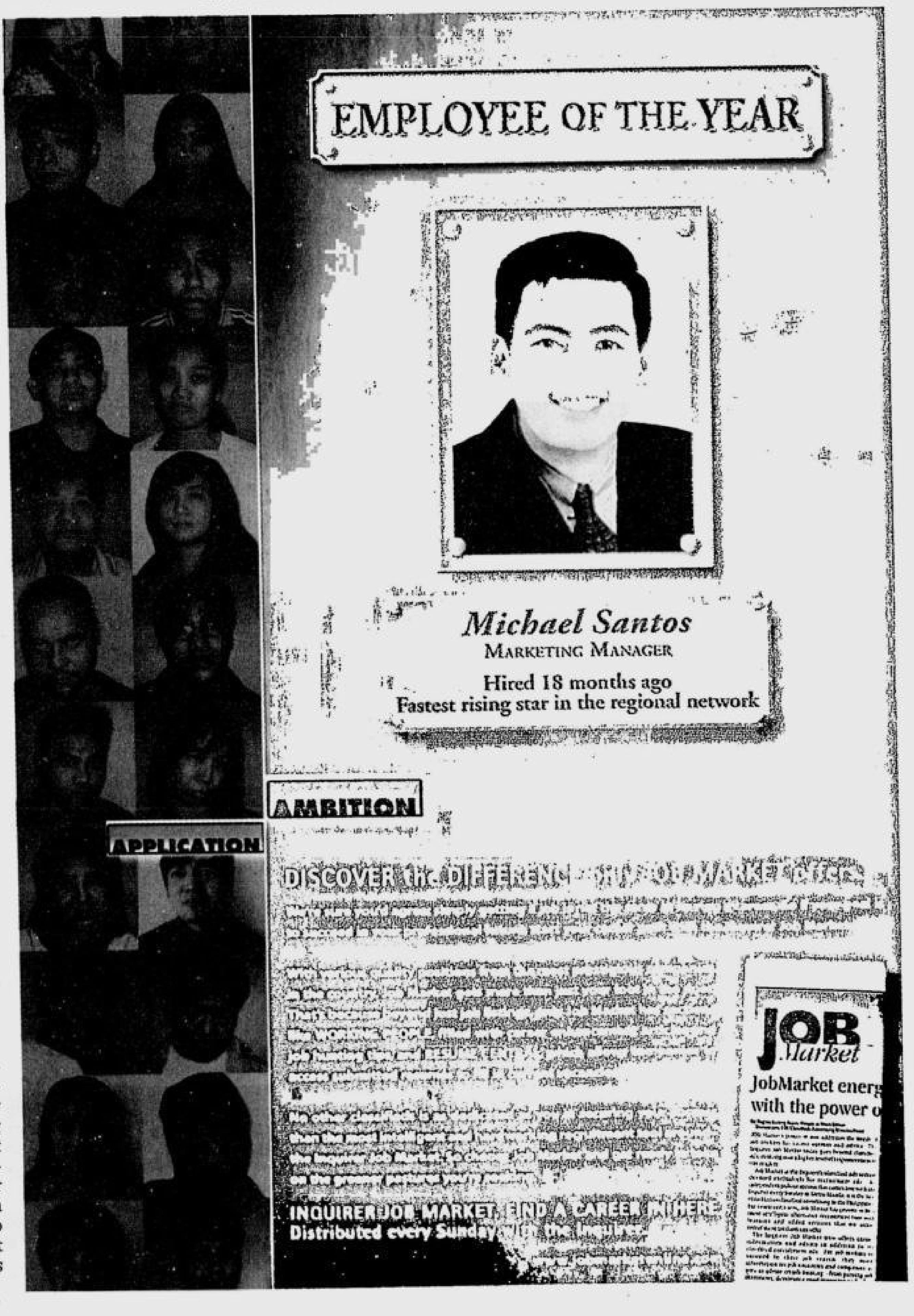
For Joanna Espares, a college freshman at the FAST—Filipino Academy of Scientific Trades—in Calapan, Mindoro, traveling two and a half hours just to get there was well worth it because she really wanted to do what she can. She also said that it was her love for the sea that brought her there. Friends Jing Jing, Shayne, Shayra, and Cristine agreed that cleaning up the beach was a must. And while they did see the trip as a good excuse to enjoy the view, they felt happy about volunteering to help preserve their hometown's treasured beaches.

Sharing the student volunteers' desire to preserve the sea and its riches were celebrities Brad Turvey and Nancy Castiglione. The real-life sweethearts do share a great love—for each other, for the ocean, and for diving—which is why they volunteered to take part of the cleanup dive without any second thoughts. As Brad likes to put it, "Any excuse to go diving is a good excuse to go diving."

Growing up from different parts of the world—Brad from sunny Aussie and Nancy from the Canadian prairies—these certified divers cite different reasons for their obsession with the ocean.

For Brad, it's an irreplaceable part of his life having grown up surrounded by beaches. For Nancy, it's a new love that she has welcomed with open arms even saying that after seeing beaches around the world, the Philippines' beaches still take the top spots in her heart.

Getting the chance to talk to such passionate people has surely had a positive effect on me. Not only do I want to seriously learn how to swim now, I am now thinking about what I can do to help. We've heard it time and again that we need to preserve nature's gifts. And I believe there's no better time than now to act on it. So give the beach some lovin', share your time, and help spread the passion for the ocean. It's about time we give something back to the beaches we all love.



# What they say about 'American Idol'

SANJAYA Malakar

AMERICA MAY HAVE ALREADY VOTED AND Paula Abdul, Randy Jackson and Simon Cowell may have already spoken, but we reckon the world should hear the comments of our three awesome 2bU! readers who watched last week's episode of "American Idol" on Star World.

As usual, we received plenty of entries in our inbox, and it was a lot of fun to read your thoughts on last week's performances. We believe many of you hit the nail on the head, so to speak, and there were not a few scathing but funny comments.

Come on!

Freddy, John and Oliver all get special premium prizes from Star World and American Idol. To claim your prize, call 8937472 to 73.

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MELINDA Doolittle

Here's how our top three choices judged the performances:

**From Freddy FYHMD (3xhcch @gmail.com):** The Diana Ross theme of course favored the African-American contestants. Melinda, Lakisha and Stephanie were in their element. The best performance of the night for me was Melinda, as usual. She is a class of her own. Since they were not divas, the boys Blake, Chris R. and Chris S. had to innovate to stand out, and they did. Phil tries hard to be a diva, almost shouting his high notes. Sanjaya is truly wretched and painful to watch.

**From John Dela Vega (johnedward-delavega@yahoo.com):** Words start to fail me when it comes to Melinda Doolittle's womanly voice. Simply amazing! The best vocals ever to hit "American Idol." She should win, hands down. A pro singer with an excellent voice, and a sweet and genuine persona that touches the hearts of the masses ... This is what an idol is all about. Her beautiful rendition of "Home" is such a tough act to follow!

**From Oliver Sy (olidex@yahoo.com):** It's such an irritating thing to see Sanjaya still part of the Top 11. Yes, I admit that Brandon wasn't so wonderful himself or gave a heart-stopping performance, but come on, Brandon sings better than Sanjaya! I don't have anything against Sanjaya, but he should have been booted out long before the other guys who got the boot! Sundance over Sanjaya?

**IWA Moto finds a buddy in Gift Factory's keel toys.**

## *Huggable toys*

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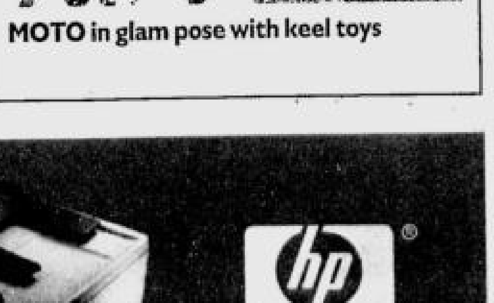
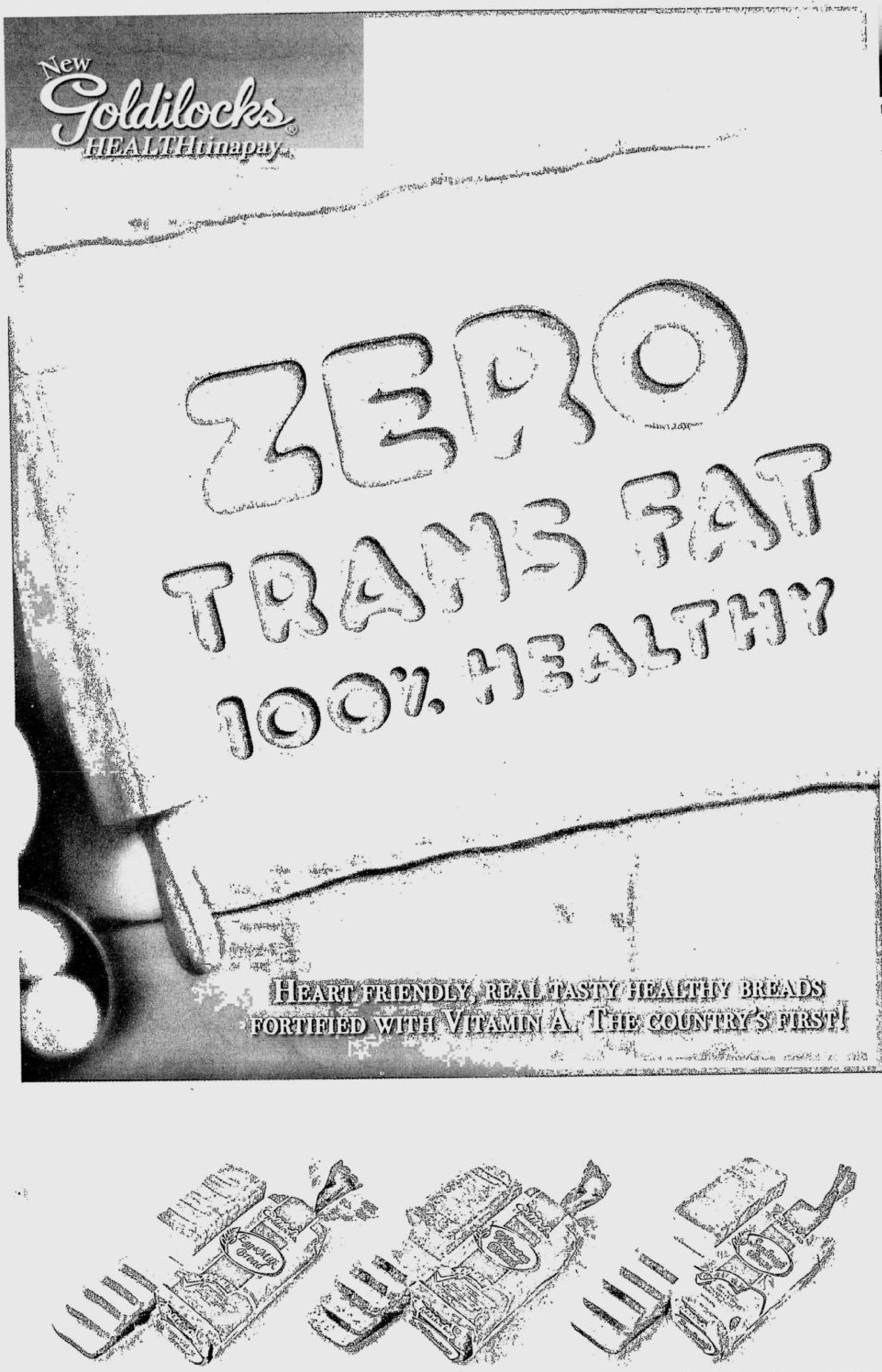


**MOTO** in glam pose with keel toys



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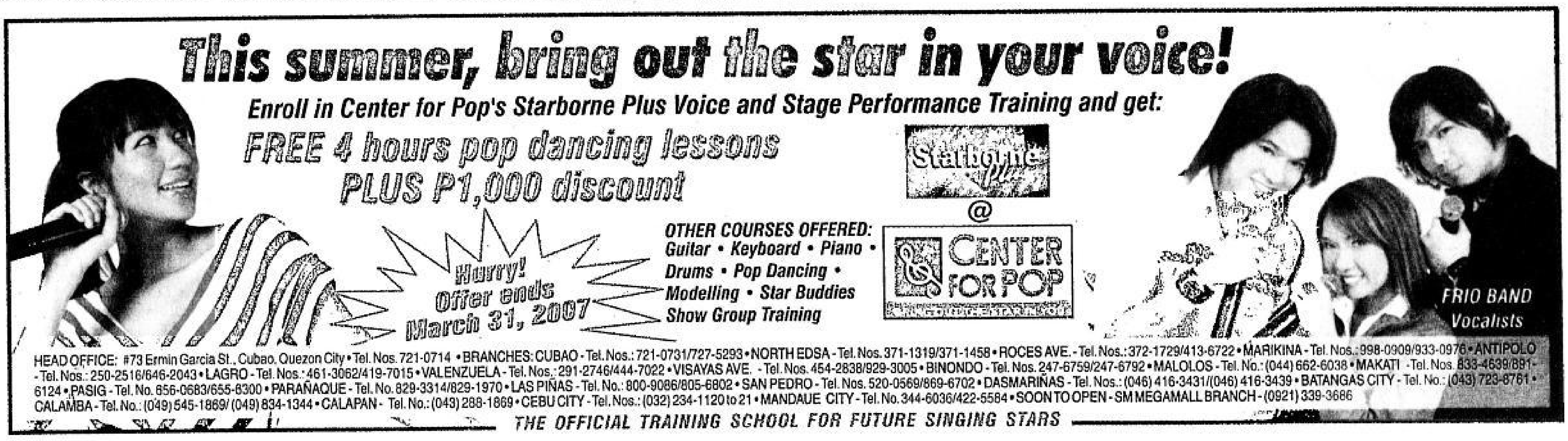
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## OPENING TODAY

### Anak ng Tinapa/Sa Aking Pagkakagising Mula sa Kamulatan

**Stars Ryan Eigenmann, Ping Medina, Atong Redillas/Carlo Aquino, Ketchup Eusebio, Bodjie Pascua**

**Directed by Jon Red/Ato M. Bautista**

Two internationally acclaimed digital films are running back-to-back at IndieSine Robinsons Galleria this week. "Tinapa" follows two crooked cops who are being trailed by film students. A Cinema One entry, "Tinapa" was an official selection in the 2005 Torino International Film Festival in Italy. "Pagkakagising" chronicles a shy young man's rude awakening in a world of violence. "Pagkakagising" was screened at the Mar del Plata film fest in Argentina and won for Eusebio an Urian for Best Supporting Actor last year.

### Ang M.O.N.A.Y. ni Mr. Shooli

**Stars Leo Martinez, Jun Urbano, Gloria Romero, Noel Trinidad, Caridad Sanchez**

**Directed by Jun Urbano**

This "timely" political satire features Mongolian philosopher Mr. Shooli (Urbano) and corrupt Congressman Manhik-Manaog (Martinez). According to Shooli, M.O.N.A.Y. stands for "Mistake of the Nation Address Yata." According to its drumbeaters, this comedy dares to "criticize actors who are venturing into politics." In spite of its controversial message, over 40 stars are in the movie. Urbano is the son of filmmaker Manuel Conde of the "Juan Tamad" series—also biting commentaries on Philippine society.

### Breaking and Entering

**Stars Jude Law, Juliette Binoche, Robin Wright-Penn, Rafi Gavron**

**Directed by Anthony Minghella**

A yuppie-architect (Law) falls for a Bosnian migrant (Binoche) whose son burgles his offices. Michael Wilmington of Chicago Tribune describes it as a "smart, well-mannered film that could use a little more juice and fire." Claudia Puig of USA Today thinks the drama's "first third is intelligent ... then the plot takes unconvincing and unlikely turns that result in an ending that feels false and forced." Bob Strauss of Los Angeles Daily News raves: "It's an unsettling pleasure, but pleasurable nonetheless, to listen to adults talk about intimate issues in an engaged, intelligent manner." Exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas.

### Premonition

**Stars Sandra Bullock, Julian McMahon, Kate Nelligan, Nia Long**

**Directed by Mennan Yapo**

Touted as "Groundhog Day" meets "Desperate Housewives," this thriller zooms in on the confusion of a woman (Bullock) after her husband (McMahon) dies only to reappear alive and kicking (actually, sipping coffee) the next day. Peter Travers of Rolling Stone comments that this film's "real horror is watching Bullock drop her big 'Miss Congeniality' smile to *act*!" Gene Seymour of Newsday concurs: "Its grimness is so remorseless ... [it's] a deadpan cosmic joke ... [that] takes its off-the-rack metaphysics way too seriously." Bruce Westbrook of Houston Chronicle disagrees: "Somber, but soulful, [it boasts] a strong dramatic performance by Bullock and a gimmicky plot that doesn't grate until the end."

### Norbit

**Stars Eddie Murphy, Thandie Newton, Cuba Gooding Jr., Terry Crews**

OPENING/ F2

# Wanted: Cannes-do spirit

**JÉRÉMY SEGAY**

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

**By Bayani San Diego Jr.**

Festival exec scouting for Filipino movies

THIS FRENCHMAN VISITING Manila is looking for local movies for possible inclusion in the Cannes International Film Festival this May.

What exactly is a Cannes-worthy film? "It's very hard to say," replied Jérémy Segay, a member of the selection committee for the Directors' Fortnight at the festival. "We're looking for a movie that shows [off] a filmmaker's unique touch ... [his] universe."

Segay said he'd be confounded if filmmakers asked him how they could break into the Cannes scene. "There is no [formula]," he told the INQUIRER in an exclusive interview last week, upon his arrival. "They should make the film they [really] want to make, tell the story they want to tell."

Martin Makalintal, audio-visual attaché of the French Embassy and Segay's guide in Manila, said that in his discussions with the Cannes Fest exec, they detected a trend. "We noticed that local films are losing their Filipino identity ... trying to copy Hollywood."

He would like to see a focus on Filipino culture but, Segay quickly pointed out, "[I] don't mean folklore films."

Makalintal elaborated: "They are looking for something that identifies a director—remember it's for the Directors' Fortnight. But what identifies a director? His surroundings ... his cultural history. Something like 'Kubrador' [would be good]. It takes place deep within Filipino society."

Segay agreed, saying he himself had been impressed by

WANTED/ F5

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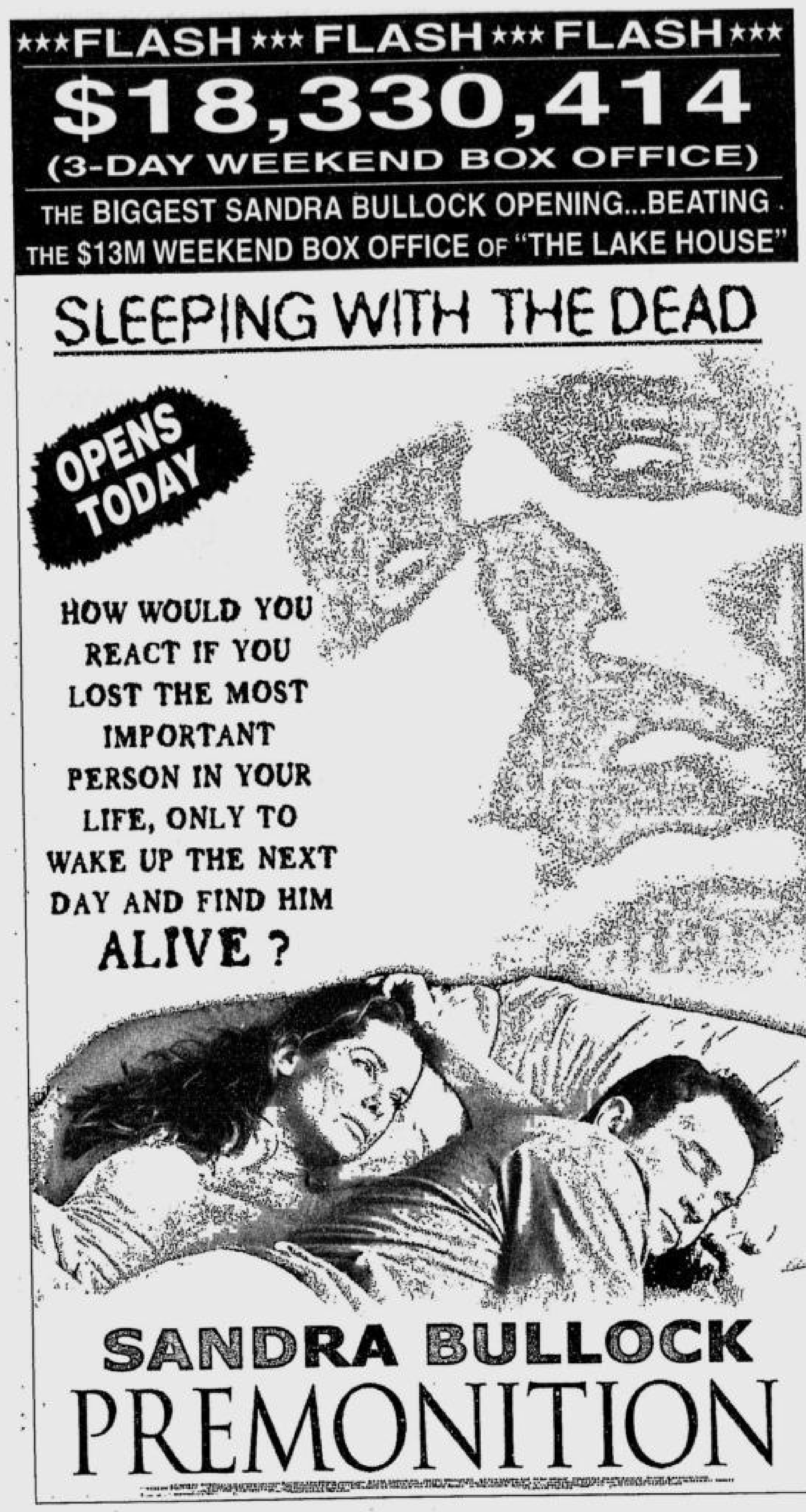
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PREMONITION

## OPENING TODAY

From page F1

**Directed by Brian Robbins**

Abandoned in an orphanage, a put-upon nerd grows up and marries a shrill 500-pound nag. Both characters are played by Murphy. Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly complains: "Murphy is like a xylophone player who keeps banging away on the same two discordant notes: Monotonous, off-key tones." Teresa Budasi of Chicago Sun-Times agrees: "[It's] a nightmare … every scene is overwrought with unfunny caricatures and tired jokes." Sean Burns of Philadelphia Weekly differs: "Sloppy, rude and undeniably funny … full of wild, surreal conceits … [but] even such ramshackle assembly can't obscure the creativity on display."

"NORBIT"

### Turistas

**Stars Josh Duhamel, Melissa George, Desmond Askew, Olivia Wilde**

**Directed by John Stockwell**

Think "Hostel," but set in the tropical paradise of Brazil. Hunky and sexy tourists are terrorized by blood-thirsty natives. Nathan Lee of Village Voice states: "[Although it] bogs down in an under-lit mess, it scratches the neo-exploitation itch." Dennis Lim of Los Angeles Times says it's "a wholly predictable bit of slasher unpleasantness, a muddled cautionary tale [on] Americans' foreign misadventures … less a critique than an embodiment of paranoid xenophobia." Jay Antani of Box Office Magazine cites the director: "He knows how to build suspense … in fashioning a thrill machine, he gets the job done."

### Zombies

**Stars Lori Heuring, Scout Taylor-Compton, Chloe Moretz, Geoffrey Lewis**

**Directed by J.S. Cardone**

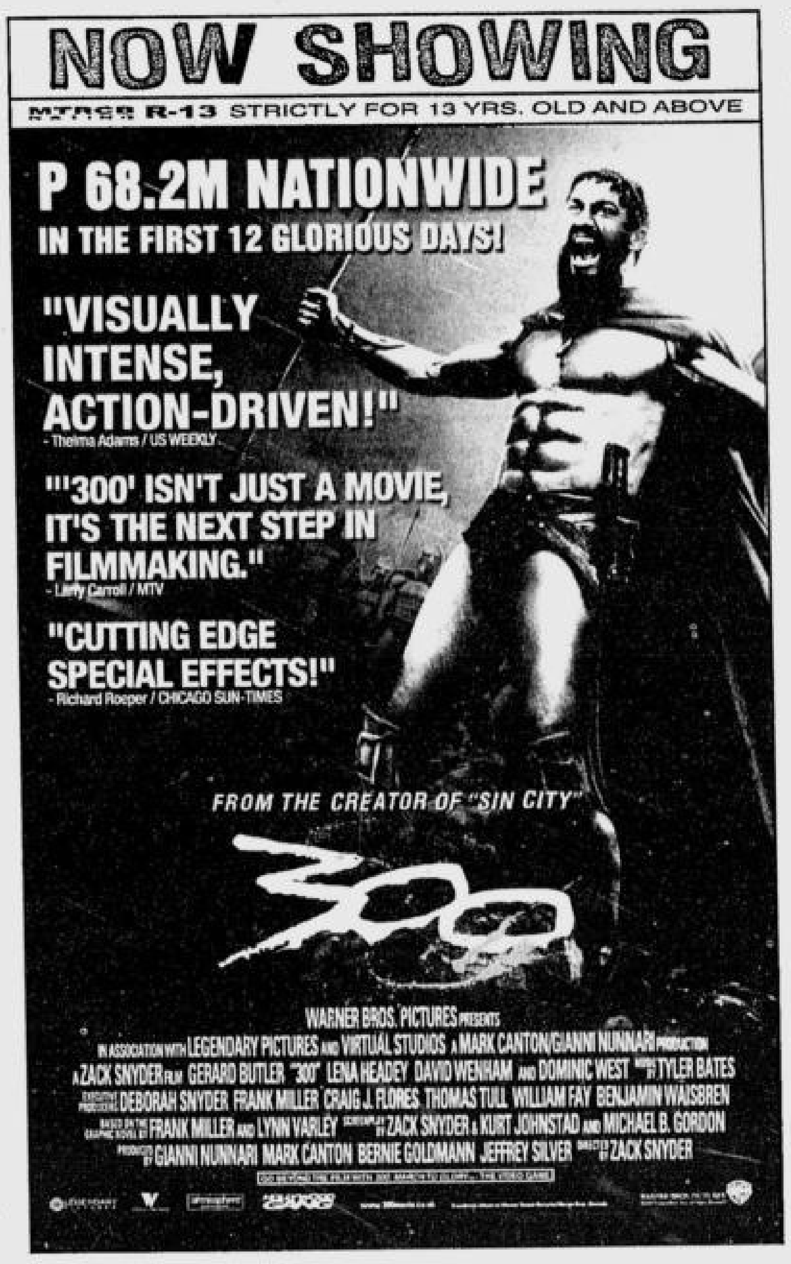
Titled "Wicked Little Things" in the United States, this screamfest tells the story of a grieving widow and her two daughters who unwittingly move to a remote mountain home near an abandoned mine where children were buried alive. Bloody-Disgusting.com rants: "[It] falls prey to the unsettling trend in horror films, where conclusion requires a gift wrap and bow. Standard film clichés were apparent and robbed the story line of some vitals … [though] the gore scores pretty high. Good, but fails to leave a lasting impression." Johnny Butane of DeadCentral.com thinks "It's gory, has a good pace, and is full of decent, if not exactly exceptional characters … a different kind of zombie story."

### Alpha Dog

**Stars Justin Timberlake, Bruce Willis, Sharon Stone, Ben Foster, Emile Hirsch**

**Directed by Nick Cassavetes**

Based on a true-life story, this crime drama tackles a 1999 California murder-kidnap case in which a 15-year-old boy is killed in a "prank gone wrong." Justin Chang of Variety calls it "standard-issue tabloid fare pimped out as a serious true-crime saga … admittedly interesting, if a [bit] artistically suspect." Ethan Alter of Premiere magazine points out that this "intriguing" film "has nothing but contempt for its central character and his posse … [but the] harshest criticism is reserved for the parents who are either overly indulgent or spectacularly neglectful." Lou Lumenick of New York Post opines that it's "irresponsible, uncommercial, but surprisingly watchable."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| | 4 BREAKING & ENTERING | 5 BECAUSE I SAID SO | 6 NORBIT | 7 PREMONITION |
| GB1 GREENBELT 1 | 1 300 | 2 NORBIT | | |
| GB3 GREENBELT 3 | 1 THX 300 GUARANTEED SEATS | 2 THX NORBIT GUARANTEED SEATS | | |
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# A sour taste in the mouth

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

RECENTLY ON Channel 2's "John En Shirley," the episode's plot revolved topically around the Chinese New Year. Unfortunately, the "comedy" the show dished out left a sour taste in the mouth because it sometimes sought to generate laughs by presenting the "Chinese" characters in its story in a stereotypically insulting light.

The characters, as played by **Epy Quizon** and another young comedian, were made to look weird, with huge, crooked teeth, moles, and pasty makeup,

A SOUR/ F4

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| ② 300<br>MTRCB: R-13<br>1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 | ④ PREMONITION<br>SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING<br>12:05, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 |

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| ALPHA DOG<br>11:50 / 2:20 / 4:50 / 7:20 / 9:50 | MONAY NI MR SHOOLI<br>1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40 | ZOMBIES<br>1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30 | |
| 300<br>2:00 / 4:40 / 7:20 / 10:00 | PATHFINDER<br>1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50 | BECAUSE I SAID SO<br>12:10 / 5:00 / 9:50<br>DREAMGIRLS<br>2:20 / 7:10 | NORBIT<br>1:15 / 3:50 / 6:25 / 9:00 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ZOMBIES<br>12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30 | 2 | TURISTAS<br>12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45 | 3 | PREMONITION<br>12:45 / 3:25 / 6:05 / 8:45 |
| 4 | ALPHA DOG<br>11:05 / 3:35 / 6:05 / 8:35 | 5 | 300<br>12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40 | | DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS |

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| PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE<br>Mar 21, Wed. 4:35 - Welcoat vs Alaska 7:20 - Purefoods vs San Miguel | FINAL TWELVE IN CONCERT<br>March 23, Friday 8 pm |

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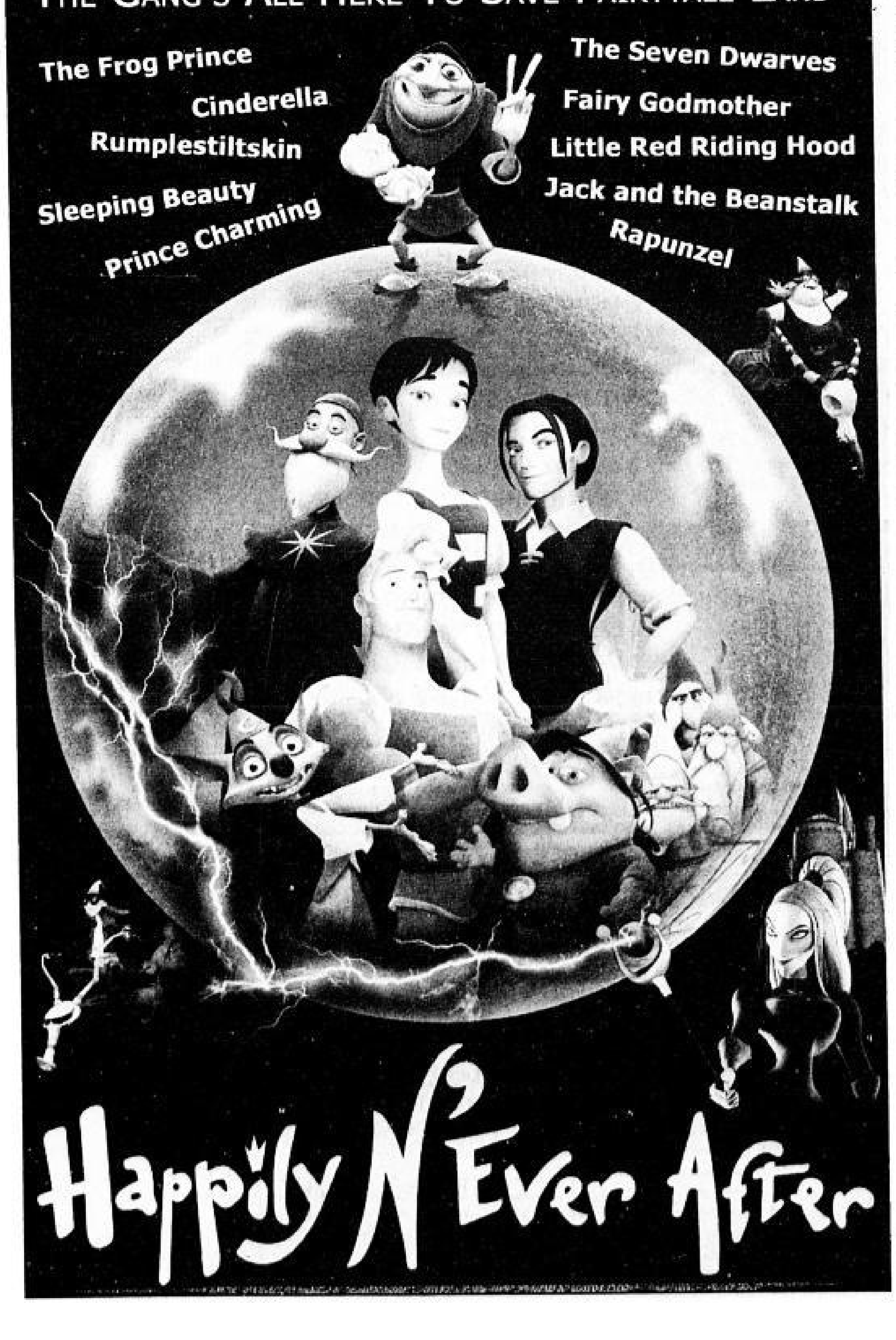

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*For inquiries, call:*
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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | PREMONITION<br>1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00<br>PG-13 |
| 2 | 300<br>12:15, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:10<br>R-13 |
| 3 | NORBIT<br>1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00<br>PG-13 |
| 4 | TURISTAS<br>1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00<br>R-13 |

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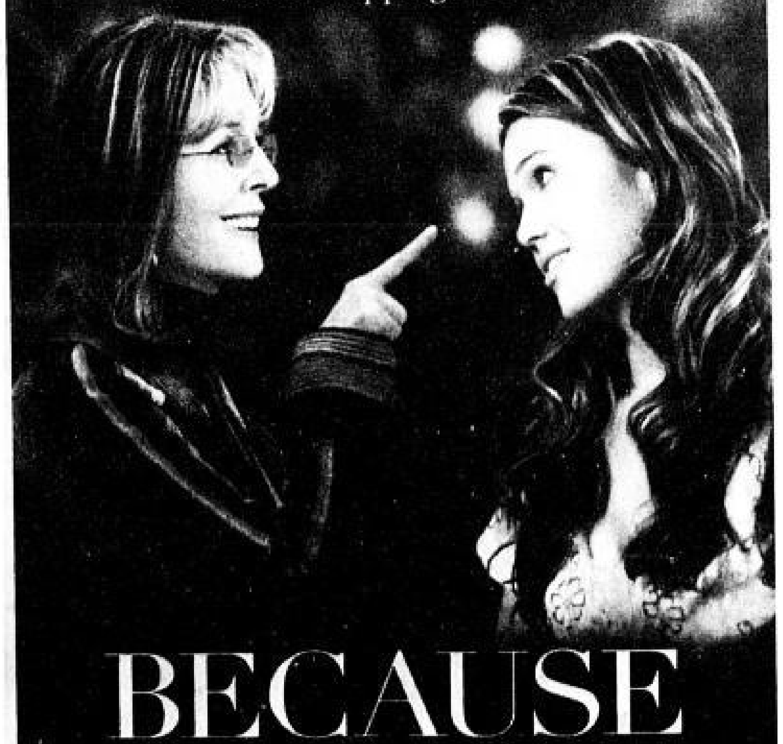
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

DIANE KEATON MANDY MOORE

Her mom shops for her food.
Shops for her clothes.
Now, she's shopping for her date.



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VIVA

---

# MMTA
## METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
## MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

**SHANG CINEPLEX**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | NORBIT |
| 2 (DOLBY) | 300 |
| 3 (DOLBY) | TURISTAS |
| 4 (DOLBY) | PREMONITION |

PREVIEWS

| | |
|---|---|
| (DOLBY) | BECAUSE I SAID SO |

**Masagana CINEMA**
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | ZOMBIES |
| 3 | ALPHA DOG |

**Center Mall Cinema**
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | PLEASE CALL |
| 2 | PLEASE CALL |

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | NUMBER 23 |
| 3 | THE HITCHER |
| 4 | IT'S A BOY GIRL THING |

**CINEMA 2000**
**Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati**
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 300 |
| 2 | PREMONITION |
| 3 | NORBIT |
| 4 | TURISTAS |

**Centre Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 2 | PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS |

**EASTWOOD CINEMAS**
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | PREMONITION |
| 2 (DOLBY) | 300 |
| 3 (DOLBY) | NORBIT |
| 4 (DOLBY) | TURISTAS |

**starmall EDSA-SHAW**
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | PREMONITION |
| 4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 5 | RESRVED |

**CINEMA 2000**
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**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 2 | DEAD PEOPLE-2 |
| 3 | 300 |
| 4 | |

**metropolis star cinema**
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(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 8433994

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | TURISTAS |
| 3 | 300 |
| 4 | |

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall**
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | RESERVED |
| 2 | RESERVED |
| 3 | RESERVED |
| 4 | RESERVED |

**THEATRES**
Pacific Mall Corporation, Telephone No. (043) 600 3025

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 300 |
| 2 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 3 | PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS |

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix**
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS |
| 2 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 3 | PLEASE CALL |

**PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC**
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YOU GOT ME |
| 2 | GHOST RIDER |
| 3 | RESRVED |
| 4 | RESRVED |

**Cinema 2000 Metrotown**
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 2 | NUMBER 23 |
| 3 | THE HITCHER |
| 4 | PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS |

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | ZOMBIES |
| 2 | PATHFINDER |
| 3 | 300 |
| 4 | TURISTAS |
| 5 | NORBIT |
| 6 | PREMONITION |
| 7 | ALPHA DOG |
| 8 | HAPPY HEARTS |
| 9 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 10 | YOU GOT ME |

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | 300 |
| 3 | PLEASE CALL |

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS |
| 2 | HAPPY HEARTS |

**Lianas Cinema**
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | PLEASE CALL |

**Blue Wave MARIKINA**
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 (DOLBY) | TURISTAS |
| 3 (DOLBY) | PREMONITION |

[illegible]O VS' SOLIS "APRIL 15, 2007

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | PATHFINDER |
| 3 | SHE WALK BY NIGHT |
| 4 | NAGBABAGANG LANGIT |

**SUPER CINERAMA**
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | PATHFINDER |
| 2 | TURISTAS |
| 3 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 4 | 300 |
| 5 | PREMONITION |

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | DEAD PEOPLE-2 |
| 2 | HUNGER FOR LOVE |
| 3 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 4 | FIRST TIME |
| 5 | SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD |

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | THE HITCHER |
| 2 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 3 | EPIC MOVIE |
| 4 | HAPPY HEARTS |

**MARKETPLACE**
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| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | DEAD PEOPLE-2 |
| 3 | ASK THE DUSK |
| 4 | THE HITCHER |

**Berma Cinema**
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MONAY NI SHOLI |
| 2 | OBSESSION |

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Admission Fee- P200

1. TURISTAS
2. PATHFINDER
3. NORBIT
4. RESERVED
5. ALPHA DOG
6. ZOMBIES

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PREMONITION
CENTERSTAGE
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THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
PREMONITION
CINEMA 2
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633-8976

**SM NORTH EDSA** 929-5452
1. ALPHA DOG
2. PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
3. ZOMBIES
4. PATHFINDER
5. HAPPY HEARTS
6. BECAUSE I SAID SO
7. 300
8. NORBIT
9. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
10. YOU GOT ME
11. TURISTAS
12. PREMONITION

**SM MEGACINEMA** 633-1901
1. TURISTAS
2. BECAUSE I SAID SO
3. PREMONITION
4. 300
5. NORBIT
6. PATHFINDER
7. ALPHA DOG
8. DREAMGIRLS
9. HAPPY HEARTS
10. YOU GOT ME
11. ZOMBIES
12. SIQUIJOR

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW** 935-0749
1. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
2. BECAUSE I SAID SO
3. TURISTAS
4. 300
5. YOU GOT ME
6. NORBIT
7. DREAMGIRLS
8. PREMONITION
9. GHOST RIDER
10. ZOMBIES
11. PATHFINDER
12. HAPPY HEARTS

**SM CITY STA. MESA** 716-1416
1. NORBIT
2. TURISTAS
3. 300
4. PREMONITION
5. HAPPY HEARTS
6. ZOMBIE
7. PATHFINDERS
8. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
9. ALPHA DOG
10. YOU GOT ME

**SM CITY SAN LAZARO** 786-2488
1. PREMONITION
2. 300
3. ZOMBIES
4. TURISTAS
5. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
6. NORBIT

**SM SOUTHMALL** 806-6888
1. PREMONITION
2. NORBIT
3. ZOMBIES
4. 300
5. PATHFINDER
6. HAPPY HEARTS
7. YOU GOT ME
8. TURISTAS
9. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI

**SM CITY BICUTAN** 776-3055
1. TURISTAS
2. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
3. PATHFINDER
4. HAPPY HEARTS

**SM CITY MANILA** 523-0240
1. TURISTAS
2. ALPHA DOG
3. PREMONITION
4. PATHFINDER
5. NORBIT
6. 300
7. BECAUSE I SAID SO
8. DEAD PEOPLE 2
9. HAPPY HEARTS
10. YOU GOT ME
11. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
12. ZOMBIES

**SM CITY DASMARINAS** (046)4323201-04
1. 300
2. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3. DREAM GIRLS
4. PATHFINDER

**SM VALENZUELA** 293-3917
1. HAPPY HEARTS
2. 300
3. TURISTAS
4. PATHFINDER

**SM CITY SUCAT** 829-4975
1. 300
2. DREAMGIRLS
3. PATHFINDER
4. HAPPY HEARTS

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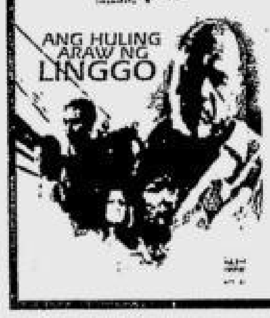
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**SM CITY BACOOR** (046)417-3868
1. TURISTAS
2. PREMONITION
3. ZOMBIES
4. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
5. 300
6. YOU GOT ME
7. HAPPY HEARTS
8. PATHFINDER

**SM CITY CLARK** (045)625-5844-45
1. 300
2. IT'S A BOY GIRL THING
3. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
4. THE HITCHER
5. NUMBER 23
6. HAPPY HEARTS

**SM CITY MARILAO** (044)9332013-17
1. 300
2. HAPPY HEARTS
3. YOU GOT ME
4. PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

### LUZON

**SM CITY BATANGAS** 885-6401-04
1. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2. YOU GOT ME
3. HAPPY HEARTS
4. EPIC MOVIE

**SM CITY PAMPANGA** (045)9637681-85
1. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2. 300
3. IT'S A BOY GIRL THING
4. THE HITCHER
5. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
6. HAPPY HEARTS

**SM CIY LIPA** (043) 756-7925
1. HAPPY HEARTS
2. EPIC MOVIE
3. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
4. THE HITCHER

**SM CITY LUCENA** (042)7108977-80
1. YOU GOT ME
2. HAPPY HEARTS
3. THE HITCHER
4. EPIC MOVIE

**SM CITY BAGUIO** (074)6197838-39
1. PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
2. THE GOOD SHEPHERD
3. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
4. 300

**SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO** (046)474-3160
1. HAPPY HEARTS
2. PATHFINDER
3. 300
4. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI

**SM CITY STA. ROSA** (049)5349811
1. BECAUSE I SAID SO
2. THE HITCHER
3. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
4. HAPPY HEARTS

**SM CITY DAVAO** (082)2976998
1. 300
2. HAPPY HEARTS
3. BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
4. MUSIC AND LYRICS
5. THE GOOD SHEPHERD
6. EPIC MOVIE

**SM CITY CAGAYAN** (088)859-2884
1. EPIC MOVIE
2. THE HITCHER
3. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
4. 300

### VISAYAS MINDANAO

**SM CITY ILOILO** (033)3209422
1. NUMBER 23'
2. RSERVED
3. MONAY NI MR, SHOOLI
4. 300
5. THE FOUNTAIN
6. THE GOOD SHEPHERD
7. RESERVED
8. BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

**SM CITY CEBU** (032)231-3876
1. PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
2. 300
3. BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
4. DREAMGIRLS
5. MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
6. SIQUIJOR
7. YOU GOT ME
8. EPIC MOVIE

**SM CITY BACOLOD** (034) 708 1010
1. BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
2. 300
3. IT'S A BOY GIRL THING
4. THE FOUNTAIN

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## ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

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1 PATHFINDER • THX
2 NORBIT
3 TURISTAS
4 MONAY NI SHOLI
5 ALPHA DOG
6 PREMONITION
7 ZOMBIES
8 indieSine: ANAK ng TINAPA SA AKING PAGKAGISING
9 BECAUSE I SAID SO DREAMGIRLS
10 300

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1 PATHFINDER
2 SIQUIJOR
3 DREAMGIRLS
4 HAPPY HEARTS
5 BECAUSE I SAID SO
6 300
7 THE PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS

**METRO EAST** Ticket Price: P100 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 NORBIT
2 ALPHA DOG
3 ZOMBIES
4 TURISTAS
5 PREMONITION
6 300
7 PATHFINDER BECAUSE I SAID SO
8 MONAY NI SHOLI

**NOVALICHES** Ticket Price: P91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MONAY NI SHOLI
2 TURISTAS
3 NORBIT
4 ZOMBIES
5 PATHFINDER
6 300

**PIONEER** Ticket Price: P102 687-5378

1 NORBIT
2 PREMONITION
3 TURISTAS
4 ZOMBIES ALPHA DOG

**STA. ROSA** Ticket Price: P75 / 80 (049) 837-0907

1 BECAUSE I SAID SO
2 300
3 MONAY NI SHOLI
4 THE NUMBER 23
5 DEAD PEOPLE 2

**LIPA** Ticket Price: P90 (043) 757-3684 (043) 312-5870

1 EPIC MOVIE
2 THE HITCHER
3 DEAD PEOPLE 2
4 HAPPY HEARTS
5 MONAY NI SHOLI

**DASMARIÑAS** Ticket Price: P75 / 80 (046) 416-4332

1 BECAUSE I SAID SO
2 MONAY NI SHOLI
3 PATHFINDER
4 DEAD PEOPLE 2

**ANGELES** Ticket Price: P 90 (045) 892-2348

1 IT'S A BOY GIRL THING
2 THE NUMBER 23
3 MONAY NI SHOLI
4 THE HITCHER / DEAD PEOLE 2

**IMUS** Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 MONAY NI SHOLI
2 TURISTAS
3 NORBIT
4 ZOMBIES
5 PATHFINDER

**STARMILLS** Ticket Price: P75 / 80 (045) 875-1927

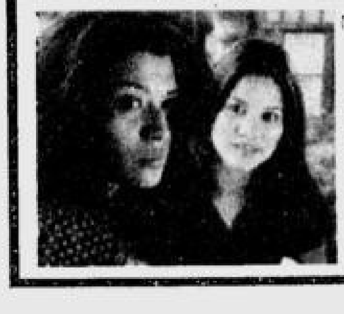
1 IT's A BOY GIRL THING
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 MONAY NI SHOLI
4 300
5 THE HITCHER
6 DEAD PEOPLE

**BACOLOD** Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 IT's A BOY GIRL THING
2 300
3 THE HITCHER
4 ROME and JULIET
5 THE FOUNTAIN
6 MONAY NI SHOLI

**ILOILO** Ticket Price: P60.50/67.50/70.50 (033) 338-8070

1 THE GOOD SHEPHERD
2 300
3 BLOOD and CHOCOLATE
4 THE NUMBER 23
5 THE FOUNTAIN
6 HAPPY HEARTS / MONAY NI SHOLI



**indieSine Featured FILM**
march 21 to 27
Robinsons Movieworld
ILOILO
Rome and Juliet

This tale follows the romantic journey of two straight women caught in a web of forbidden love. Juliet, a conservative pre-school teacher hires Rome, a liberated businesswoman to be her wedding planner. As they go through the preparations, the two develop a relationship that the groom to be soon finds out.

---

# A sour taste ...

From page F3

and they talked in very thick "Intsik" accents that made it difficult for viewers to figure out what they were saying.

To be sure, it turned out that the two characters weren't *really* Chinese, but were in fact Pinoy scam artists who were pretending to be feng shui experts in order to fleece John, Shirley and Encarnacion.

But the way they pretended to be Chinese was still stereotypically insulting, so the more enlightened people involved in the show should have asked for it to be toned down.

Yes, it's important for a sitcom to generate laughs, but not at the expense of race or creed. The racial stereotyping that the episode engaged in was a throwback to the less enlightened '50s and '60s, when racist slurs were deemed "funny" by more people.

It's 2007 now, and many more viewers have wised up to the fact that racism, even in the name of "fun and games," is never acceptable, because it encourages viewers to continue to ridicule others who don't happen to look or sound like them.

The best way to illustrate the negativism that such practices engender is to reverse the situation and make the objects of fun not Chinese, but Filipinos: How would the show make its *Filipino* characters "funny" by denigrating them and spoofing their worst traits?

More to the point, would local viewers find such "comedy" funny?—Naturally not, since *they* would then be the objects of ridicule.

Remember past instances in foreign films and TV shows when Filipino characters were depicted in a negative light, and many Filipinos protested? Well, those racial slurs were milder than those heaped on foreign characters like the Chinese, the "Bombay" and blacks in some "entertainment" shows here.

To become truly liberal and global in outlook, we need to rise above our unenlightened insularism, and strive to understand and empathize with other people, and how they think and feel.

That may not be wildly funny, but it's respectful of all people as equals.

## Feedback

From **Allan R. Respicio** of Makati City: "I hope that the organizers of this year's Metro Manila Film Festival will learn from the controversy generated by last year's festival.

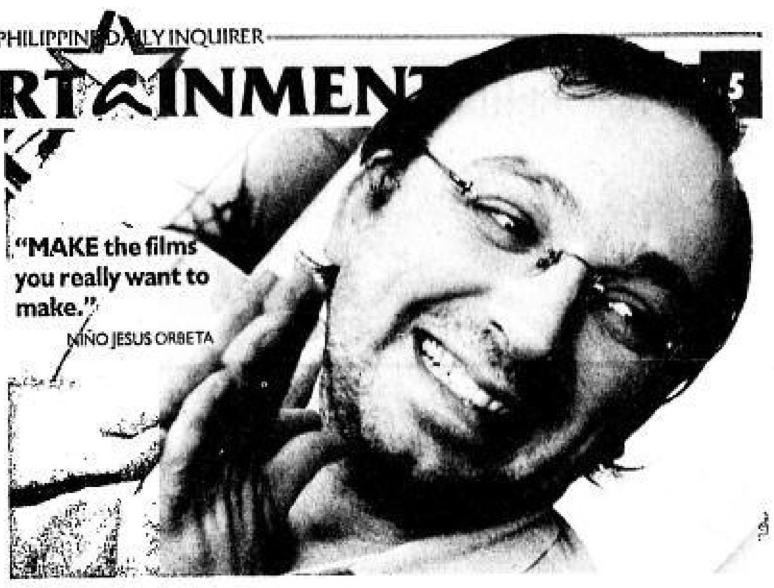
"They should realize that the movie audience today wants to see the best that our filmmakers are capable of producing.

"If the festival becomes a real competition of the best movies, it will be exciting. If it's just a

A SOUR/F5

# Wanted: Cannes-do spirit

From page F1



"MAKE the films you really want to make."

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

the Jeffrey Jeturian movie. He then mentioned that "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" was set to be screened in Paris next month.

"In Europe today, there is great interest in Asian cinema," he said. "Sometimes films considered as commercial in Asia are hailed as artistic, and are shown, in Cannes."

As example, he offered "The Host," a box-office hit in Korea that was screened at the Directors' Fortnight last year.

## Previous visits

The last time Segay was in the Philippines was in 2003. The year before that, he participated in a roundtable discussion during the Cinemanila festival. He didn't get to watch local movies on either visit.

It was in France that he caught Mario O'Hara's "Babae sa Breakwater," the last Pinoy film shown in Cannes (2004). He recalled, "Jacob Wong (a film curator from Hong Kong) told us to check out O'Hara's film. So we requested a print from the producer and watched it in Paris."

In 1982, Mike de Leon's "Batch '81" and "Kisapmata" were screened at the Directors' Fortnight.

Will Segay's five-day search yield happy results for Pinoy cinema? "I still don't know," he said.

Segay is one of five members of the selection committee. If he finds something here, he can recommend a preview with his peers in France before the ultimate deadline, April 27.

"I am assigned to Asia. I often travel to Korea and Hong Kong. This year, I wanted to visit the Philippines," he said. The Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) lined up meetings and screenings for the visiting Frenchman.

# A sour taste in the mouth

From page F4

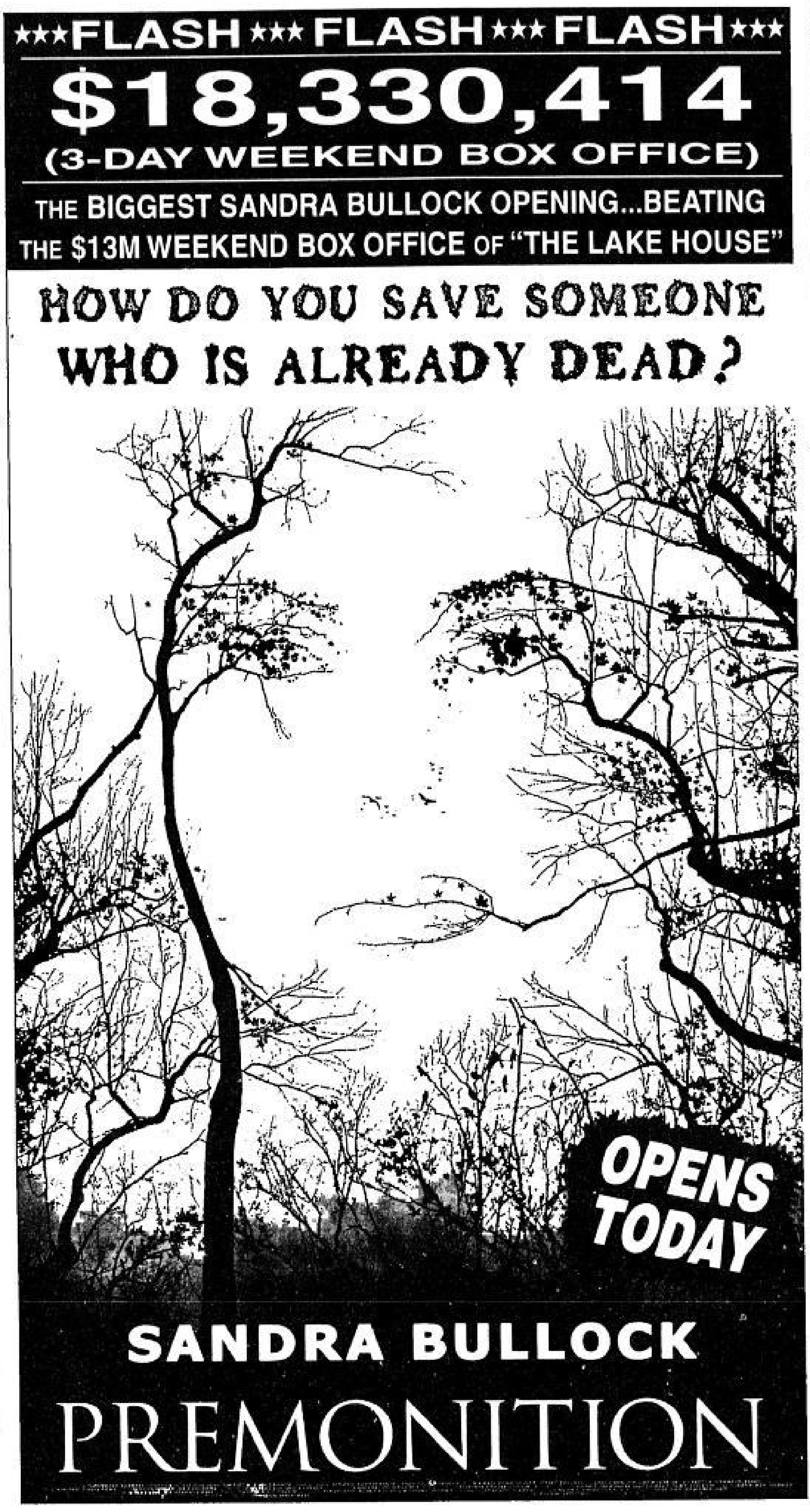
commercial showcase for fantasy films, it should do away with its competition part, because the nominees and some "winners" would be undeserving, and people will complain again.

"The festival's organizers should establish its proper focus now, while there's still time."

From **Zennia** in Afghanistan: "It is so wonderful to finally read something that appeals to the sense of goodness of people amidst the scandals going on in the Philippines.

"Your column 'Shame and scandal in the show biz family' hit the nail on the head. We really should not ride on something that is private and make fun of it—or worse, make money from it.

"Sadly, though, not all writers have common sense like you do. Gossip seems to be their bread and butter, and therefore, they can turn their backs on friends..."



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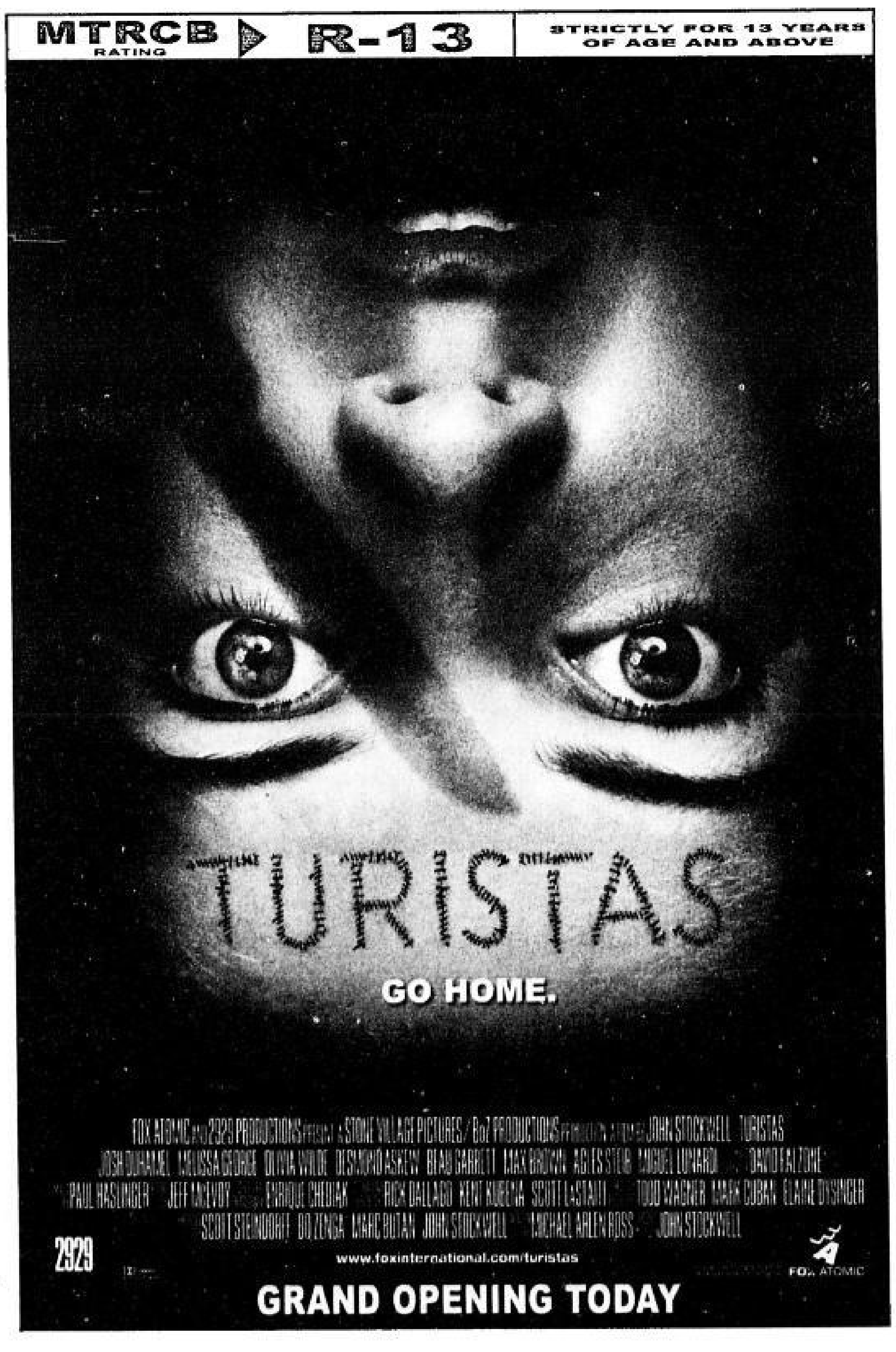
THE BIGGEST SANDRA BULLOCK OPENING...BEATING THE $13M WEEKEND BOX OFFICE OF "THE LAKE HOUSE"
HOW DO YOU SAVE SOMEONE WHO IS ALREADY DEAD?
OPENS TODAY
SANDRA BULLOCK
PREMONITION



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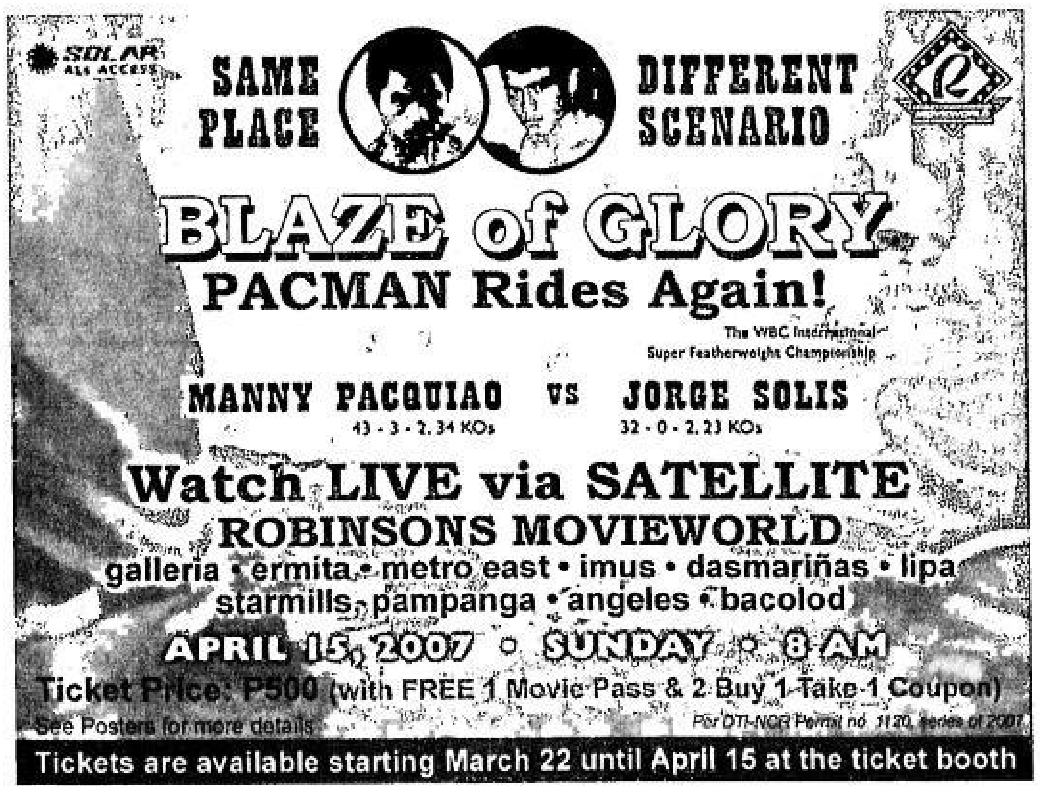

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SAME PLACE
DIFFERENT SCENARIO
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The WBC International Super Featherweight Championship
MANNY PACQUIAO 43 - 3 - 2, 34 KOs vs JORGE SOLIS 32 - 0 - 2, 23 KOs
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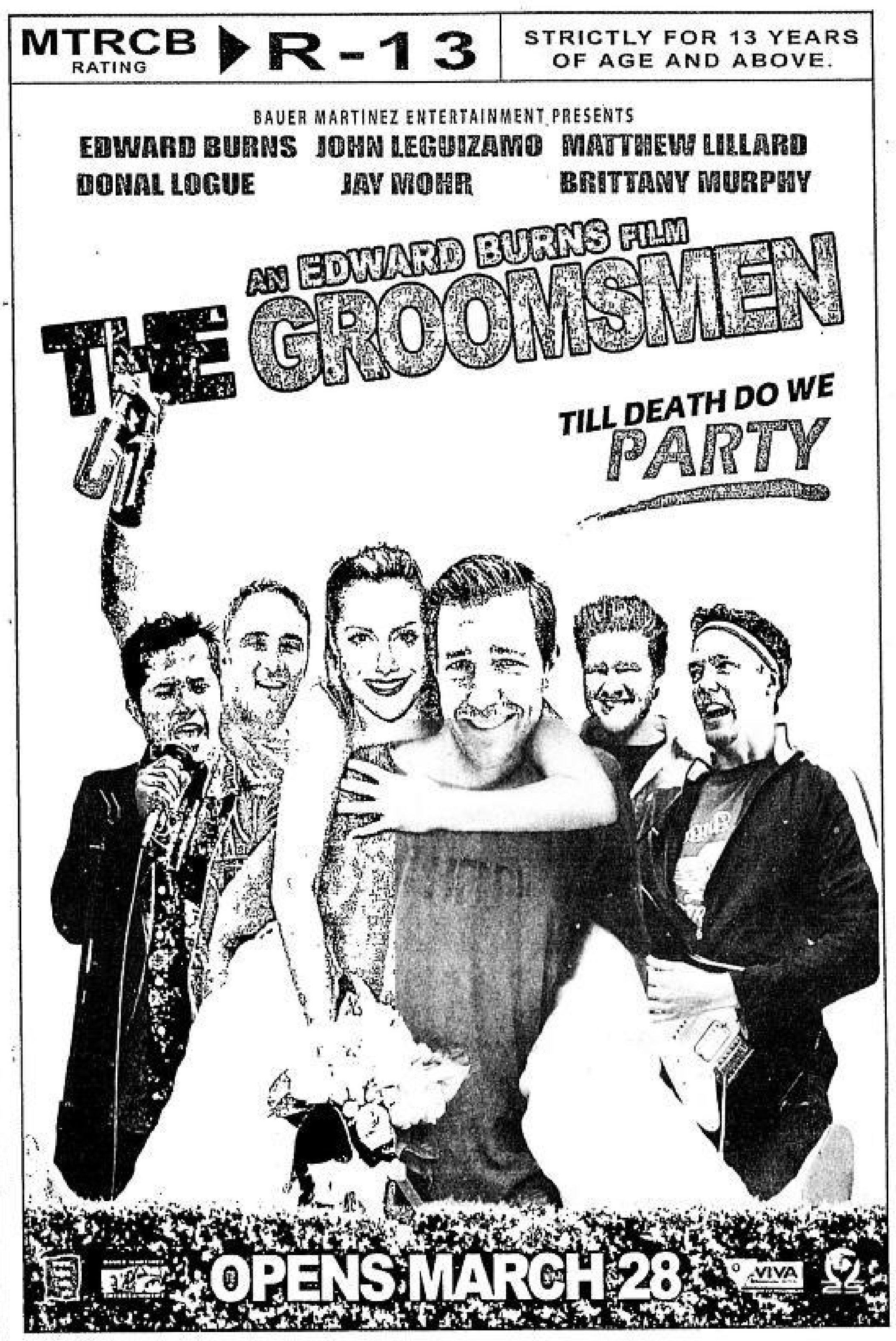
APRIL 15, 2007 ○ SUNDAY ○ 8 AM
Ticket Price: P500 (with FREE 1 Movie Pass & 2 Buy 1-Take-1 Coupon)
See Posters for more details
Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 1130, series of 2007
Tickets are available starting March 22 until April 15 at the ticket booth



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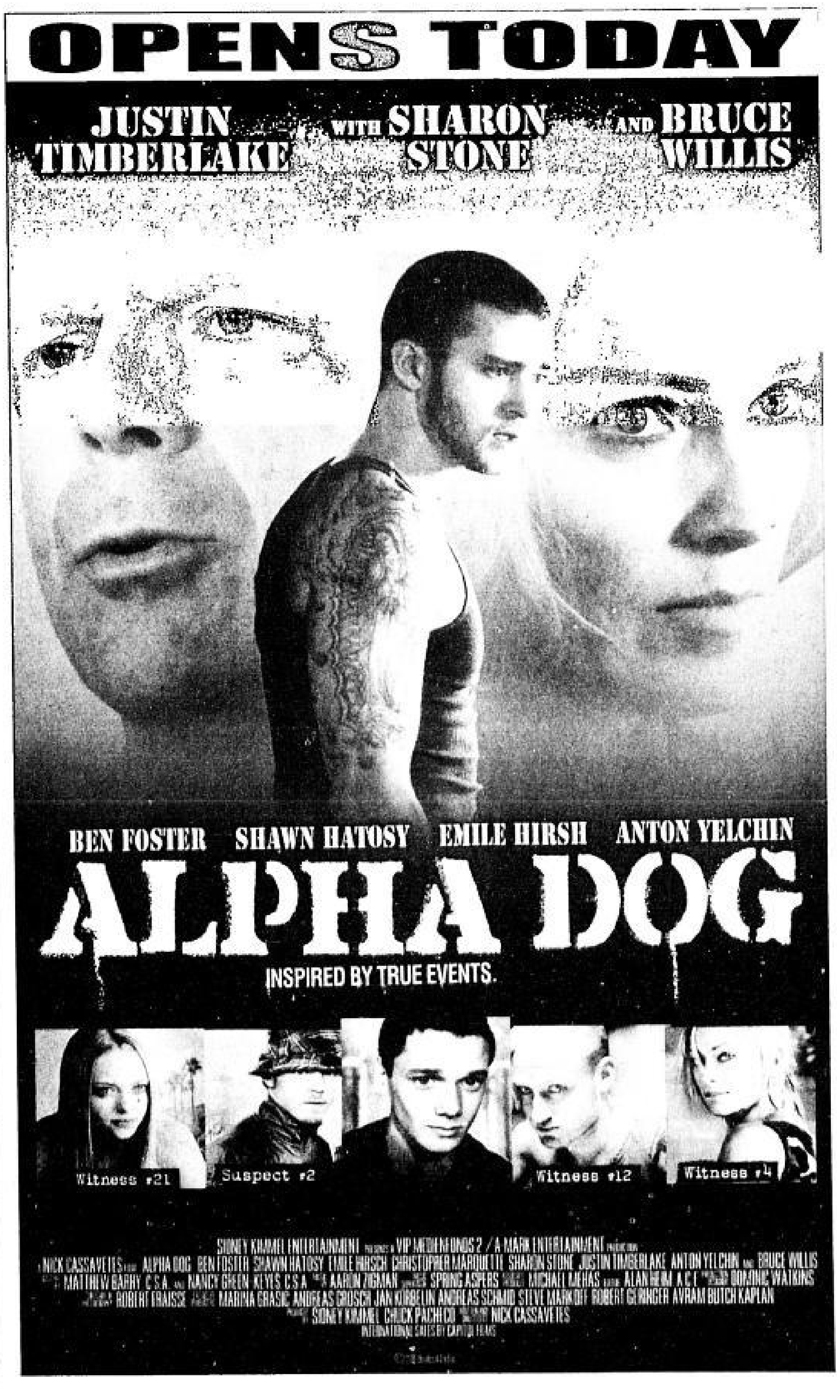
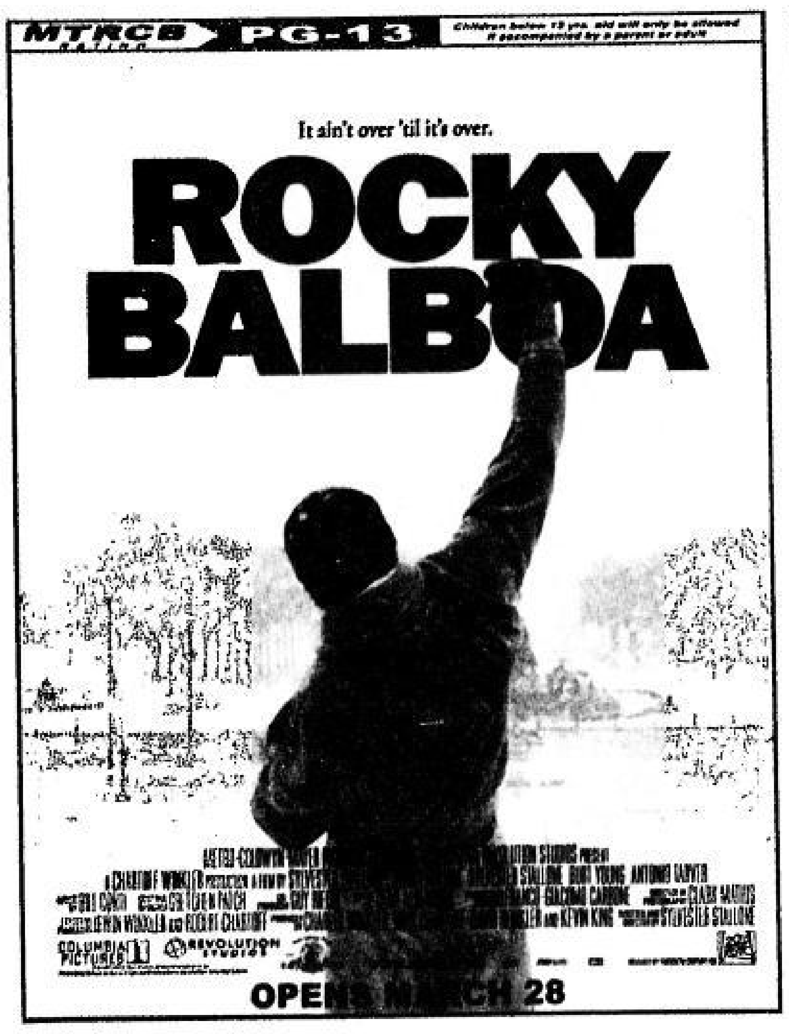
EDWARD BURNS JOHN LEGUIZAMO MATTHEW LILLARD
DONAL LOGUE JAY MOHR BRITTANY MURPHY
AN EDWARD BURNS FILM
THE GROOMSMEN
TILL DEATH DO WE PARTY
OPENS MARCH 28



OPENS TODAY
JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE WITH SHARON STONE AND BRUCE WILLIS
BEN FOSTER SHAWN HATOSY EMILE HIRSH ANTON YELCHIN
ALPHA DOG
INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS.
Witness #21 Suspect #2 Witness #12 Witness #4


MTRCB RATING PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
It ain't over 'til it's over.
ROCKY BALBOA
OPENS MARCH 28

# Ex-backup singer to go solo from 'AI'

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

NO MORE BACKUP SINGING FOR BRANDON Rogers, who said in a recent conference call that his experience on "American Idol" gave him the confidence to pursue a solo career. The first finalist to get the boot this season sang backup for the likes of Justin Timberlake, Usher and Christina Aguilera.

"When you're a little kid, you don't dream of being a background singer," said the 28-year-old from North Hollywood. "It's a great job and I love doing it. But I've always wanted to be on that big stage. I'm excited to continue on the solo path."

During the conference call made possible by StarWorld, Brandon was asked if he was surprised that he had lost to Sanjaya Malakar. Graciously, he replied: "I didn't lose to anybody. I just got the least number of votes."

**What would you have done differently?**

I would probably pick better songs that showed the range, and some of the bigger qualities of my voice.

**How did you forget the lyrics?**

I wish I could chalk it up to nerves, or pressure, or going first. But it was just me having too much of a good time. I did my little dance, my little hip shimmy. And the crowd screamed, and I was like, "Whoa, this is awesome!" I completely lost the line.

**Who was your roommate?**

For the most part of my stay, it was Phil Stacey.

**What did you learn from the show?**

That no matter what the media and the judges say, I can take it and I'm good enough to be out there.

**Do you prefer the judges to be brutally honest?**

I would rather that they stay on point, criticizing the performance and the voice. Clothes, body type and appearance—things that cannot be easily changed—should not be commented upon.

**Did Simon, Randy and/or Paula come up to you after your elimination?**

They all did, and said it was my song choice and not my singing.

**What is the swan song you could have sang that would have blown us away?**

"Song for You" by Danny Hathaway.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

BRANDON ROGERS

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PATHFINDER
TWO WORLDS. ONE WAR. THE ULTIMATE BATTLE BEGINS.
NOW SHOWING

## HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT SOMETHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN AND IT DID?

**PREMONITION: The Film**

*Linda Hanson* (*SANDRA BULLOCK of "The Lake House"*) has a beautiful house, a loving husband and two adorable daughters. Her life is perfect, until the day she receives the devastating news that her husband *Jim* (*JULIAN McMAHON of "Fantastic 4"*) has died in a car accident. For this devoted wife and mother, it's the worst that could happen. But when Linda wakes up the following morning her husband is very much alive.

Sandra Bullock in "PREMONITION"

At first, Linda believes the accident must have been a nightmare. Then it happens again; some days Linda awakens to find Jim is next to her alive and well, while on others she awakens a widow. Inexplicably, she is living the days of her life in terror.

The word PREMONITION comes from the Latin pramonere, meaning 'to warn in advance'. Without a doubt, there are people who have visions or premonitions that come true. Sometimes it only happens once in their lifetime, but sometimes it is a constant occurrence of terrifying experiences.

**True-to-Life Stories of Terrifying PREMONITIONS:**

Sunna Roulston had booked a trip to Thailand when she began having terrible premonitions. She went on the trip anyway. It was while Sunna was on a small wooden boat off Thailand's coast that the devastating 2004 tsunami hit. While being rescued, a voice told her not to go with the larger rescue boat and stay with the smaller one. After a few minutes, an enormous wave capsized the larger boat, drowning everyone onboard.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

David Booth has had many dreams of airplane crashes in the late 1980's. He called American Airlines, but they were unable to take preventive measures. Three days later, an American Airlines DC-10 jet lost an engine, flipped upside down, flew over low buildings and exploded on the runway killing all 271 passengers. It was one of the worst air disasters in American aviation history.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

In the late Aberfan disaster on October 21, 1966, a colliery waste tip (containing unwanted rock from the local mine) slid down Merthyr Mountain. It destroyed 20 houses, a farm and all of Pantglas Junior School. A little girl by the name of Eryl Mai Jones dreamt of the disaster two weeks before it happened and shared her dream with her mother. Eryl perished in the disaster along with 28 adults and 116 children.

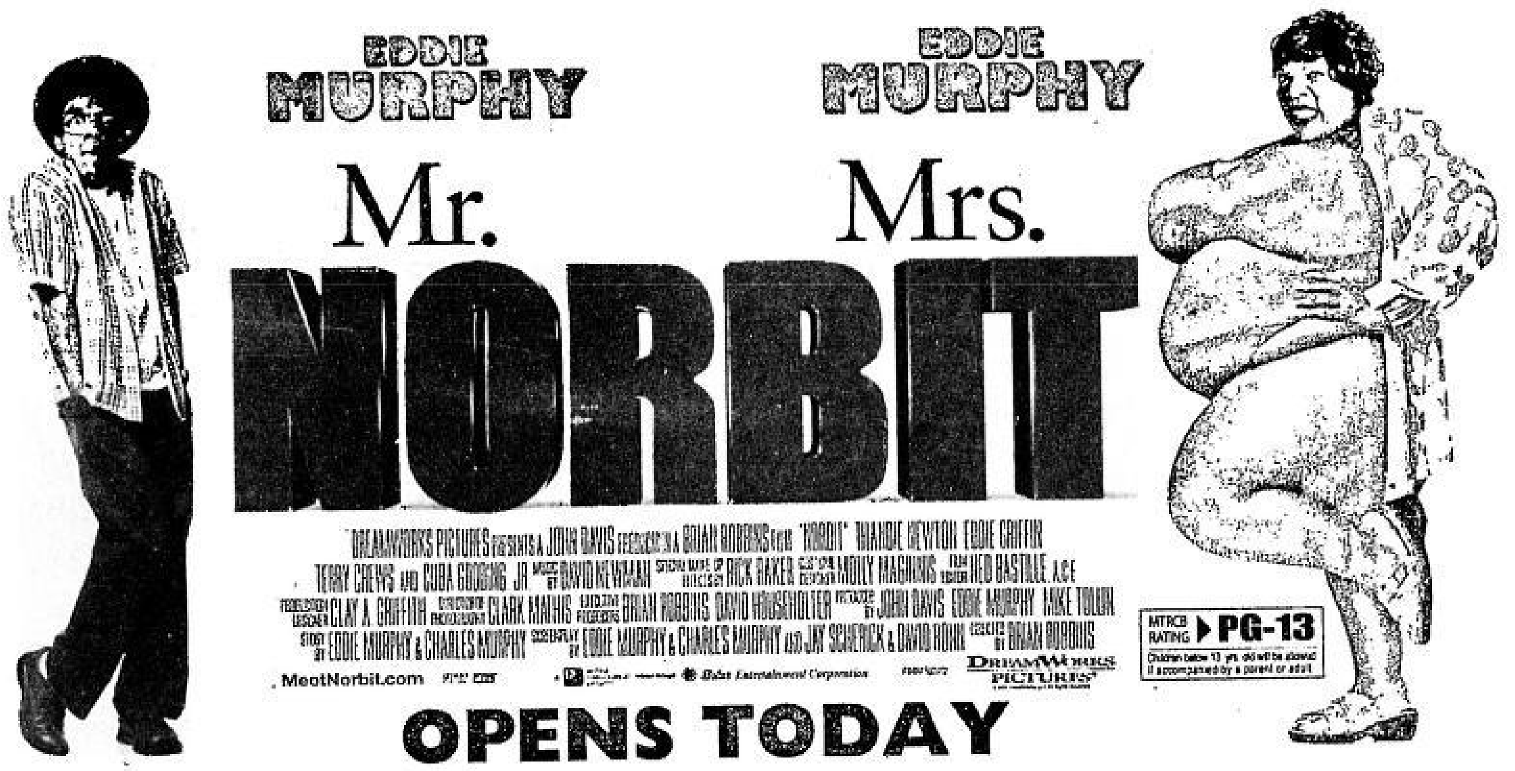
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

In Biblical times, a Pharaoh dreamed of 7 fat and 7 thin cattle. Joseph deciphered it as meaning that 7 years of plentiful harvest would be followed by 7 years of famine. The Pharaoh built up food stocks and saved the country.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

In September 1981, Barbara Garwell dreamed of a group of dignitaries in Middle East, at a stadium. A number of soldiers ran up to the rows of men and gunned them down. 21 days later, on October 6, 1981, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt was assassinated and several other people were killed at an identical event, commemorating the 1973 Yom Kippur war with Israel.

ADVT.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OF THE "EVIL DEAD" SERIES...
COMES A CONTEMPORARY VERSION
THAT PROVES THE LEGEND IS NOT PURE FICTION!
THIS TIME, THE ONLY ESCAPE IS TO BECOME ONE!
ZOMBIES
They're back to make the living suffer the most horrifying death!!!
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